

## Boise Story Ideas

### Arts & Culture

Boise has plenty to offer anyone seeking cultural opportunities or experiences. The city is proud of its philharmonic orchestra, contemporary and classic theater companies, modern and ballet dance companies and choral and opera companies. Here you can enjoy outdoor performances along the Boise River or find kids in the park creating art. A number of art galleries promote an impressive array of artwork by locally and nationally acclaimed artists and public art is easily visible throughout the city. The Boise City Arts Commission has a map-brochure available listing the city's many cultural locations and public art sites which include sculpture, photography, tile work, tapestries, murals, stained glass and paintings. (208-433-5670) [www.cityofboise.org/ArtsAndHistory](http://www.cityofboise.org/ArtsAndHistory)

### Food and Wine

The dining options in Boise are sure to suit any taste. Choices are limitless; from elegant dining rooms to casual brew pubs; ethnic eateries to comfy coffee bars; trendy bistros to riverfront patios. Experience the flavors of the Northwest with wild game and fish, or enjoy a great steak and potato in a leisure setting. Ethnic restaurants are plentiful and range from Mediterranean to Thai. And, with the Basque culture so prominent in Boise, don't miss the opportunity to try delicious Basque food and wine. In March, 2007 the US Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) designated Idaho's Snake River Valley as an American Viticultural Area (AVA), an important distinction that brands the southern portion of the state as America's next great wine region. The Snake River Valley, with its combination of microclimates, soil and other growing conditions, is now officially recognized as a unique grape growing region capable of producing excellent wines. There are more than 13 wineries within a short drive of Boise. These wineries produce award-winning Chardonnays, Cabernet Sauvignons, Merlots, Johannisberg Rieslings and Pinot Noirs. One vineyard, Koenig Distillery and Winery, also produces award-winning classic European eau-de-vie fruit brandies using the area's finest peaches, apricots, plums, pears and cherry varieties.

[www.idahowines.org](http://www.idahowines.org)

### Basque Culture in Boise

The only **Basque Museum and Cultural Center** in North America, and one of only two in the world, is located in Boise. The Basque Museum and Cultural Center was established in 1985 as a small museum in the historic Cyrus Jacobs-Uberuaga boarding house at 607 Grove St. in Boise, Idaho. This charming old boarding house served as "home away from home" to hundreds of Basque shepherders who found themselves living and working in the new world. As the Museum's interpretation of the history of the Basques, their origins, and their new life in America developed, artifact donations and museum displays increased. So did the need for more space. The Museum's main facility moved next door with exhibits, classrooms, a library, collections areas and a gift shop. The boarding house stands as a living history exhibit. The Basque Museum and Cultural Center has become one of Idaho's finest cultural institutions, interpreting the unique Basque Heritage for the public through a variety of educational programs, lectures and presentations, exhibits and classes in the Basque language, dance and music. The country's first Basque preschool, an Ikastola, has also been established. Museum collections include oral history archives, a library, a records/tapes collection, manuscript materials, various artifacts and photos. It is the home of significant resources for anyone interested in Basque history and culture. An international festival, called "JAIALDI", has been held in Boise in 1987, 1990, 1995, and 2005...the next will be in July, 2010! This wonderful event typically features a downtown street fair, orchestral, dancing and choir performances, sport and strength competitions and traditional Basque foods. Performers and athletes from the Basque Country, across the United States and from around the world come to Boise to take part in Jaialdi. (208-343-2671)

<http://www.basquemuseum.com> , <http://www.jaialdi.com>

### **M.K. Nature Center**

The unique Morrison-Knudsen Nature Center offers a one-of-a-kind fish and wildlife experience on a 4.6-acre site along the Boise River Greenbelt near downtown Boise. The Nature Center's outdoor nature walk and indoor visitor center provide a glimpse of Idaho's many landscapes and abundant wildlife. Underwater viewing windows along the stream walk give visitors a fish-eye view of the world. Habitat viewing areas demonstrate how people can attract and enjoy wildlife in their own backyards by providing adequate habitat. The M.K. Nature Center represents the cooperative work of private, public, state and federal contributors and is an integral feature and attraction in Boise. (208-334-2225) <http://www2.state.id.us/fishgame/info/education/mknc>. (Select MK Nature Center under Education Button).

### **Kathryn Albertson Park**

Kathryn Albertson Park provides a unique home for wildlife and a place for people. Wildlife and people living together may seem improbable, yet through thoughtful landscape architecture, biological and environmental planning and an attitude of mutual respect, wildlife is thriving in the company of people. The park incorporates three major landscape features: vegetation, ponds and open space. Over 400 trees, 2,000 shrubs and a myriad of flowers and grasses fill the park. The idea of creating an attractive home for wildlife began with Joe Albertson, one of the city's most respected citizens and founder of the Albertsons supermarket chain. An appreciation for outdoor experiences and a desire to help Idaho's wildlife resources inspired Mr. Albertson to establish an urban wildlife sanctuary on land he owned near the Boise River. On October 17, 1989, Kathryn Albertson Park, named for his beloved wife, was dedicated and donated to the Boise Park System as a gift to the people of Idaho. There is a bit of history in the park as well. Bridging the ponds are yellowed wooden uprights, once part of an Idaho Power Company span that crossed the Snake River near Twin Falls. The red tile roof of "The Rookery" once topped Albertson's first supermarket, opened in Boise in 1939. And supporting the roof are broad wooden beams from a hangar located where Boise State University now stands. In 1926, the first commercial air-mail service in the country operated from this airport and spawned what is now United Airlines. Joe Albertson passed away in January, 1993, his wife Kathryn, in April, 2002. The couple was married more than 60 years. (208-384-4240)

### **The Idaho Shakespeare Festival**

The Idaho Shakespeare Festival was born with the production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at an outdoor restaurant in downtown Boise in 1977. Today it is recognized as Idaho's premier professional, repertory theater company with annual audiences of more than 50,000. The Festival is an integral part of the cultural and economic community of Boise and the State. The 2008 season features William Shakespeare's *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Macbeth*; *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller; *Into the Woods*, book by James Lapine, Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and *Greater Tuna* by Jaston Williams, Joe Sears and Ed Howard. The season runs June through September with performances held at an outdoor amphitheatre on the banks of the Boise River. The Festival also produces a series of educational programs that include: Matinees at the Festival for nearly 7,000 students; Shakespeareance (the Festival's educational touring program) bringing Shakespeare to more than 20,000 students throughout the state; training programs for undergraduate and graduate interns and high-school apprenticeships. (208 336-9221) [www.idahoshakespeare.org](http://www.idahoshakespeare.org)

### **World Center for Birds of Prey**

The World Center for Birds of Prey is the headquarters of The Peregrine Fund, a non-profit organization dedicated to raptor conservation and captive breeding. The Peregrine Fund developed from the shared concern of students and associates that the Peregrine Falcon might go extinct in the wild if nothing was done. The group's initial work was to learn how to breed falcons in captivity with the idea the young could be released in the wild, to re-establish the Peregrine in the eastern United States where it was already gone and to bolster the greatly diminished western populations. Established in 1984, the World Center houses over two hundred birds of prey, the young from which are released to the wild in the United States and abroad. While much of the facility is closed to the public, the Velma Morrison Interpretive Center offers visitors the opportunity to learn about birds of prey and how birds are bred in captivity to be reintroduced into the wild. Visitors will see falcons, eagles and California Condors and enjoy interactive displays, multi-media shows and an original art display. (208-362-8687) [www.peregrinefund.org](http://www.peregrinefund.org)

### **Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area**

The Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area is home to the largest concentration of nesting raptors in North America. The majority of visitor use is land-based, including sightseeing, horseback riding, hiking, hunting and recreational shooting, mountain biking, picnicking and camping. From March through June, sightseeing and nature study related to nesting birds of prey attract local, national and international visitors. A guided float trip offers a good opportunity to see nesting and fledgling raptors in the canyon. These spring months are also the peak use period for hikers, mountain bikers and float boaters (rafts, kayaks and canoes). During the frequent hot summer days, water-based recreation, including float-boating, power boating and fishing are popular along the 81 miles of the Snake River. The sheltered canyon areas of the NCA offer spring and fall weather conditions that average 5-10 degrees warmer than temperatures in Boise. This has caused the NCA to be increasingly popular with the public because it provides outdoor recreational opportunities in the late winter, spring and fall when many higher elevation recreation areas are too cool or inaccessible due to weather. (208-384-3300) [www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/four\\_rivers/special\\_areas/snake\\_river\\_birds.html](http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/four_rivers/special_areas/snake_river_birds.html)

### **Old Idaho Territorial Penitentiary**

Built in 1870 and used as a prison until 1973, the Old Idaho Territorial Penitentiary housed many Wild West desperadoes in its time. The Old Pen, one of only four territorial penitentiaries still standing in the U.S., is open for daily tours. The Idaho Territory was less than ten years old when the territorial prison was built east of Boise. The penitentiary grew from a single cellhouse into a complex of several distinctive buildings surrounded by a high sandstone wall. Convicts quarried the stone from the nearby ridges and completed all the later construction. Over its century of operation, the penitentiary received more than 13,000 convicts, of whom 215 were women. Spurred in part by conditions that sparked a general riot in 1971 and an even more severe riot in 1973, the inmate population was moved to a modern penitentiary south of Boise and the Old Idaho Penitentiary was closed on December 3, 1973. After the Penitentiary closed, the site was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. A visit to the Old Pen can begin with a video presentation recalling prison history, notorious inmates and daily prison life. Once inside the Yard, visitors can imagine life in the foreboding sandstone cellhouses, see the contrasting beauty of the historic rose gardens and view the effects of the 1973 riot. Visit Solitary Confinement, known as "Siberia," as well as Death Row and the Gallows. Exhibits are located throughout the site. With such a unique and interesting setting, the Old Pen is also an excellent site for group events and theme parties. (208-334-2844) <http://www.idahohistory.net/oldpen.html>

### **World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame**

The World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame was established to honor sports figures who are not only great athletic champions, but who use their prominence to do good for the human race. Myron Finkbeiner originated the idea of the Hall of Fame during his 25-year coaching career. During that time he wondered, "Where are the athletes who are doing good and noble things, and why don't we hear about them?" The answer: good guys don't sell newspapers. Thus, the World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame was founded to showcase athletes who are making a difference.

In addition to exhibits about the inductees, a series of displays entitled, "The Joy of Sport" lets visitors learn about "Joys" like Card Collecting, The Race for the Home Run Record, Coach John Wooden's Pyramid, the Evolution of the Baseball Glove, High Jump records and the Humanitarian Bowl. In addition to recognizing the annual Inductees, the Hall of Fame has four other Award programs. The "Tradition of Excellence" Award, is given to a Heisman winner who has gone on to a successful career with a record of humanitarian efforts. Mike Garrett, 1965 Heisman winner from the University of Southern California received the award in 2008. The 2009 World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame inductees are NBA's Adonal Foyle, MLS great Diego Gutierrez and US hurdler Tracy Mattes. A complete list of inductees is available at [www.sportshumanitarian.com](http://www.sportshumanitarian.com) (208-343-7224)

### **Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial**

"Today, we celebrate the realization of a dream," said Idaho's Governor Dirk Kempthorne at the opening of the memorial in August, 2002. "We are witnesses to what can happen when a community and an entire state come together for a cause. This memorial, the first in the United States to honor Anne Frank, will have a lasting impact on generations of Idahoans who come here to learn about courage, strength, dignity of human spirit and the value of the rights of all men and women." Located on the banks of the Boise River behind the Library and the Log Cabin Literary Center, the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial features two reflective ponds, three waterfalls, a 90-foot reading circle, an amphitheater and a life-size, bronze sculpture of Anne Frank. Tablets of Idaho sandstone and travertine feature the entire Universal Declaration of Human Rights and 60 quotes from human rights leaders and activists, such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Martin Luther King Jr., Chief Joseph and Confucius. Originally envisioned by a group of Boise women led by the Reverend Nancy Taylor, Leslie Drake and Lisa Uhlmann, the design, funding and construction of the Memorial began in 1995. More than 3,000 individuals and corporations from throughout Idaho and the U.S. donated money for the \$1.5 million project, while students from more than 40 in-state schools produced plays, washed cars, sold candygrams and collected pennies for a life-size statue of Anne Frank. Frank, a German-Jewish teenager forced into hiding for 25 months during the Holocaust, was eventually arrested and deported with her family to Nazi concentration camps. She died of typhus at Bergen-Belsen in 1945. Her diary, saved during the war and published in 1947, is one of the world's most widely read books. (208-345-0304)

[www.idaho-humanrights.org](http://www.idaho-humanrights.org)

### **Urban Raft Trips – Perfect for adults and young children looking for a calm river experience.**

If you want to take a raft trip, but aren't interested in whitewater, the drive to the launch point, or an overnight campout, here are two ways to enjoy nature at its finest, but not necessarily its wildest. Outfitters offer two- to three-hour float trips on the Boise River from Barber Park to Ann Morrison Park near downtown. This gentle float introduces guests to the history, geology, wildlife and riparian community along the river - the wilderness in Boise's backyard. Outfitters include Riverroots, (208-850-7637) [www.riverrootsltd.com](http://www.riverrootsltd.com) and Epley's (208-577-4584) <http://www.adaweb.net/departments/parkswaterways/FloatInfo.asp>

### **Soul Food Extravaganza**

Take the first Saturday in August to learn about and celebrate the Treasure Valley's African-American culture, while contributing to charitable causes in the community. The Soul Food Extravaganza began in 1993 as a picnic to foster camaraderie among the area's growing African-American population and to share in some good "down home" cooking. It has evolved into a full-scale celebration highlighting African dances, storytelling, gospel music, a fashion show, African arts and crafts and children's activities - and don't forget the food! All profits from the event are donated to Treasure Valley charities. (208-939-5258) [www.boisesoulfoodfestival.com](http://www.boisesoulfoodfestival.com)

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