

TOP 10 EVENTS

With nearly 1,900 events scheduled in 2013, there's plenty to engage visitors in Alabama. Here, we present the state's top 10 for the year, either because they'll happen only once or because they're so unique you won't want to miss them. In addition, we list the top 10 by month, by region. Which ones will you attend?



» MARDI GRAS, JAN. 26-FEB. 12

MARDI GRAS IN MOBILE

JAN. 26-FEB. 12 | MOBILE | 800-5-MOBILE

www.mobilebay.org. *Free. Downtown.* Mobile is known as home to "America's Family Mardi Gras." The celebration lasts for more than two and a half weeks and culminates on Fat Tuesday, the day before Lent. The streets are filled with marching bands, floats and crowds of parade goers. Masked riders in costume toss "throws" of beads, moon pies, doubloons and candy into the crowd.

W.C. HANDY MUSIC FESTIVAL

JULY 19-28 | FLORENCE & OTHER SHOALS CITIES | 256-766-7642

www.wchandymusicfestival.org. *The Shoals (Florence, Sheffield, Tuscumbia and Muscle Shoals), various locations.* Weeklong celebration honoring Florence native, W.C. Handy, "Father of the Blues," with more than 200 events taking place including concerts, plays, art exhibits, picnics and more.



» ALABAMA RESTAURANT WEEK, AUG. 16-25



» W.C. HANDY MUSIC FESTIVAL, JULY 19-28

ALABAMA RESTAURANT WEEK

AUG. 16-25 | STATEWIDE | 800-252-2262

www.alabama.travel. *Various restaurants throughout the state.* Restaurants around the state, including many featured in the popular brochure "100 Dishes to Eat in Alabama Before You Die," invite diners to experience the wonderful culinary scene of Sweet Home Alabama. Participating restaurants will offer special fixed-priced meals for lunch and/or dinner and other specials throughout the week.



» FORT MIMS 200TH ANNIVERSARY, AUG 30-SEPT 1

FORT MIMS 200TH ANNIVERSARY

AUG. 30-SEPT. 1 | TENSAW | 251-937-5665, 251-533-9024

www.fortmims.org. *Historic Fort Mims, 12 mi. north of Stockton off AL Hwy. 59/CR 80.* Event begins on the actual anniversary date of the attack on Ft. Mims. Memorial and Dedication Service on Friday when descendants of survivors, historians, and state and local dignitaries gather to 'Remember Fort Mims.' Living history encampment with settlers, militia and Redstick Creek Indian re-enactors, arrowhead and artifact displays, demonstrations of early crafts such as basket weaving and flint napping, period music, Indian crafts and culture and more. Concessions available. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

MAGIC CITY CLASSIC WEEKEND

OCT. 25-26 | BIRMINGHAM | 205-977-9335

www.themagiccityclassic.com. *Admission charged. Legion Field.* The Alabama A&M University Bulldogs of Huntsville and the Alabama State University Hornets of Montgomery meet annually in Birmingham for this traditional football rivalry featuring exciting half-time band action. This is the largest black college football rivalry in the country. Please check the website for all the latest information, including pre-game activities.



» MAGIC CITY CLASSIC WEEKEND, OCT 25-26

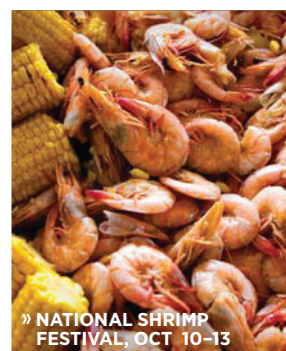
50TH ANNUAL BLUFF PARK ART SHOW

OCT. 5 | HOOVER | 205-822-0078

www.bluffparkartshow.com. *Free. Bluff Park Community Center & Park.* Always held on the first Saturday in October, this juried fine arts show attracts the best artists in the southeast and beyond for a one-day celebration of artistic talent. Meet the artists and enjoy seeing and purchasing their works of art in a beautiful wooded park setting. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.



» 50TH BLUFF PARK ART SHOW, OCT 5



» NATIONAL SHRIMP FESTIVAL, OCT 10-13

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OCT. 10-13 | GULF SHORES | 251-968-7220

www.nationalshrimpfestival.com. *Free. Gulf Shores Public Beach Area.* This is one of the nation's premier outdoor festivals featuring more than 300 vendors that offer fine art, arts and crafts, a retail marketplace, children's activity village, 10k/5k run, live entertainment, and of course, shrimp. Th-Sat. 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

BARBER VINTAGE FESTIVAL

OCT. 11-13 | BIRMINGHAM | 205-699-7275

www.barbervintagefestival.org. *Admission charged. Barber Motorsports Park.* Featuring road racing, motocross, cross country events, an air show, a swap meet with more than 250 vendors, a fan zone and more.



» BARBER VINTAGE FESTIVAL, OCT 11-13

GALAXY OF LIGHTS

NOV. 28-DEC. 31 | HUNTSVILLE | 256-830-4447

www.hsvbg.org. *Fee for attractions only. Huntsville Botanical Garden.* A magnificent two-and-a-half-mile long holiday light extravaganza featuring larger-than-life animated light displays. Special exhibits include a holiday village, dinosaurs, wild animals, a magical twinkling icicle forest, garden scenes, animated snowmen and the twelve days of Christmas. 5:30-9 p.m.

CHRISTMAS ON THE COOSA

DEC. 14 | WETUMPKA | 334-567-1313, 334-567-4811

www.wetumpkachamber.com. *Free. Gold Star Park & Courthouse Veranda.* Christmas extravaganza with arts and crafts, parade, food, quilt show, classic car show, entertainment and activities on the Coosa River culminating with a spectacular fireworks exhibition at dusk.



» GALAXY OF LIGHTS, NOV 28-DEC 31, CHRISTMAS ON THE COOSA, DEC 14