Welcome to Independence, Missouri. Located immediately east of Kansas City, Missouri, Independence is right in the heart of our nation’s history. Sights, sounds, good eats, and unique shops await visitors of all ages looking for something new while feeling right at home.
LOCATION
Independence is located in Jackson County, Missouri. Independence is approximately 11 miles east of Kansas City, MO; 150 miles northwest of Jefferson City, MO; 72 miles east of Topeka, KS; and 195 miles south of Des Moines, IA.

BASIC STATS
POPULATION
121,000
TIME ZONE
Central
AVERAGE YEARLY RAINFALL
39"
AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS WITH SUNSHINE
216
AIRPORT
Kansas City International Airport (MCI)

TRIVIA
NICKNAME
Queen City of the Trails
SISTER CITY
Higashimuryama, Japan
LARGEST FESTIVAL
SantaCaliGon Days
MOST OFFBEAT ATTRACTION
Leila’s Hair Museum

CLAIMS TO FAME
Former U.S. President
Harry S. Truman
Former First Lady Bess Truman
Actress Ginger Rogers
Professional baseball player
Albert Pujols
Artist and politician
George Caleb Bingham
Independence, Missouri, is a city unlike any other.

The story of America has deep roots here. You can see it in wagon wheel ruts that crisscross our roads. You can hear it in the courtroom where a future president once presided.

The story of our country echoes off the walls of places like the Bingham-Waggoner Estate and the Vaile Mansion. It’s celebrated at festivals, like SantaCaliGon Days. It reverberates throughout Historic Independence Square.

As the primary starting point of the Santa Fe, California, and Oregon trails, Independence attracted the pioneers, boat-rockers, risk-takers, and dreamers who are woven deep into American history. They were self-reliant, determined, and fearless, not unlike the people of Independence today.

It’s not surprising, then, that 100 years later, the 33rd President of the United States, Harry S. Truman, should also find his roots here.

In his own pioneering way, Truman faced some of his position’s most challenging decisions, in turn writing an important chapter of world history. As a great American himself, Truman also helped shape our country’s ideals and its role in the world.

But the Trumans never forgot where they came from. They led simple, traditional, unpretentious lives at home in Independence—the kind of lives that attract so many to the city today.

Even today, Independence is a city where adventure and comfort meet.

From the strength and fortitude of its earliest trailblazers to the straight-talking, pragmatism of Harry S. Truman, Independence has provided the country just what it needed at just the right time.

The legacy of Independence is alive and well today. The light radiates brightly today from the city that shined the way for so many over the years.

Independence, Missouri, is a great American story.
WHAT’S TRENDING

TRUMAN LIBRARY RENOVATION
The Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum is undergoing a $30 million renovation, set for completion in fall 2020. When complete, the library will boast a 3,000-square-foot addition with a new front entrance and lobby, as well as completely new and reimagined museum exhibits.

CABLE DAHMER ARENA
In the past year alone, the Cable Dahmer Arena has hosted such acts as Billie Eilish and Adam Sandler. The arena is also host to the Kansas City Mavericks professional hockey team. The venue boasts plenty of sporting and entertainment events throughout the year. It’s near I-70, as well as plenty of shopping, dining, and hotel accommodations.

THE INDEPENDENCE SQUARE
The Independence Square is as alive and well today as it was in the days of pioneers. As the cultural hub of our city, visitors can shop, dine, and experience history all in one place. The Square plays host to several popular events each year, including SantaCaliGon Days, one of the largest annual festivals in the Kansas City Metro.

KC SPORTS
The 2020 Super Bowl Champion Kansas City Chiefs and 2015 World Champion Kansas City Royals both play at the nearby Truman Sports Complex. Located off of I-70 and I-435, Independence is mere miles from world-class professional sports.
SANTACALIGON DAYS FESTIVAL
For almost 50 years, we’ve gathered to celebrate our heritage as the starting point of the Santa Fe, California, and Oregon trails. This free festival brings more than 300,000 people to the Independence Square annually.

SQUARE LIGHTING
Join us in November for the lighting of the Square for the holiday season. From the awnings of each business to the columns of the courthouse, we go all out to show our holiday spirit.

INDEPENDENCE UNCORKED WINEFEST
This is the largest Missouri wine festival in the state, featuring 25 Missouri wineries, a guest spirits distiller, and 2,400 attendees. Independence Uncorked also features art, music, beer, food booths, and wine classes.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL
Join us on the grounds of the beautiful Vaile Mansion for this annual craft and antique show, complete with strawberry treats.

BREAKFAST AND BLOOMS
This annual event offers a delicious breakfast buffet and flower presentations on the grounds of the Bingham-Waggoner Estate, once owned by the internationally famous artist George Caleb Waggoner.

HARRY’S HOP ‘N’ HUNT
Each Easter, we bring this classic White House tradition to the lawn of the Truman Library, including Easter egg hunts, live music, and storytelling.
FEATURED ATTRACTIONS

From pioneers to Presidents, Independence is home to 16 heritage attractions. Just east of Kansas City, Independence is the hometown of President Harry S. Truman as well as the jumping off point for the western movement. Enjoy visiting the Harry S. Truman Library and Home, the 1859 Jail, the National Frontier Trails Museum, historic homes, and world-renowned religious sites.

Come experience great shopping and dining on the historic Square and an MISL soccer game, an ECHL hockey game, or a CIF arena football game at the Cable Dahmer Arena.

* Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum
* Harry S Truman National Historic Site (Truman Home)
* Historic Independence Square
* Vaile Mansion
* Bingham-Waggoner Estate
* National Frontier Trails Museum
* 1859 Jail, Marshal's Home & Museum
* Chicago & Alton Depot
* Cable Dahmer Arena
* Independence Center

TRIVIA

Independence was the first city to have a train west of the Mississippi River. It was mule powered and ran on wooden rails from Wayne City Landing to Independence.

The Bingham-Waggoner Estate still has many of its gas chandeliers, Oriental carpets, and other Victoria and Edwardian accessories still intact from the 1899 remodeling.

Construction of the Vaile Mansion completed in 1881 at a cost of $150,000 (nearly $4 million in 2020) in the Second Empire/French Revival style, and is considered one of the best examples of this in the country.

The log courthouse was built in 1827 and remained the only courthouse located between Independence, Missouri, and the Pacific Ocean for more than 40 years.
KEY PROJECTS

The year 2020 will see several tourism attraction enhancements in Independence.

There are several major projects underway at historic sites in Independence: the $30 million renovation at the Truman Library, a restoration and relocation of the Pioneer Spring Cabin, a renovation of the Truman Depot, and renovations at the 1859 Jail, Marshal’s Home & Museum.

We’re proud of our historic sites in Independence. Whether you’ve visited before, or you’re considering a trip, keep an eye on 2020, as we look to reveal these new and improved attractions.

TRUMAN LIBRARY

Many people who visit Independence do so to see the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum. The facility is undergoing a major renovation to better tell the Truman story and bring the museum experience into the 21st century.

The museum closed to the public in July 2019 for its renovation. A fundraising effort by the Truman Library Institute is aiming to raise $30 million toward the project, which will see the installation of a new permanent exhibition and upgrades to the visitor experience, including improved storytelling, enhanced interactive and technology-based experiences, and a comprehensive educational strategy.

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION**

Fall of 2020

**TOTAL COST**

$30 million

**LEAD ORGANIZATION**

Truman Library Institute

TRUMAN DEPOT

Built in 1913 for the Missouri Pacific Railroad, this redbrick train station is most commonly called the Truman Depot in honor of President Harry S. Truman. In 2020, the City of Independence will add a Whistle Stop Tour museum to the space.

The scope of the restoration includes minimal exterior work and instead focuses on the interior of the building. In addition to improving the amenities available to travelers, the project calls for the development of a Whistle Stop Tour exhibit, full-time staffing of the depot, and construction of a trail to the historic sites around the National Frontier Trails Museum.

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION**

2020

**TOTAL COST**

$350,000

**LEAD ORGANIZATION**

City of Independence

THE 1859 JAIL, MARSHAL’S HOME & MUSEUM

The 1859 Jail, Marshal’s Home & Museum is one of the oldest buildings on the Historic Independence Square. More than 160 years later, the Jackson County Historical Society is embarking on a major restoration of the structure.

In conjunction with the 160th anniversary of the jail’s construction, as well as the 60th anniversary of its opening as a museum, owner-operator Jackson County Historical Society initiated a significant restoration project on the historic structure in late 2019.

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION**

Phase 1: Fall of 2020

Total scope: 5 to 7 years

**TOTAL COST**

$800,000

**LEAD ORGANIZATION**

Jackson County Historical Society

LEARN MORE ABOUT UPCOMING PROJECTS AT VisitIndependence.com/tourism-2020/
PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY
Harry S. Truman was a hometown boy and one of America’s greatest and most beloved presidents. Get an authentic look at history as you walk through his neighborhood and experience his legacy at his presidential library.

PIONEERS & ADVENTURERS
Independence has always been a magnet for pioneers, risk-takers and dreamers. Come retrace the Santa Fe, Oregon and California Trails on a mule-drawn wagon ride or cast your eyes that once housed notorious outlaw Frank James.

HISTORIC HOMES
Independence is home to one of the most significant historical sites in western Missouri, the Bingham-Waggoner Estate, as well as one of the best examples of Second Empire style architecture in the United States, the Vaile Mansion.

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