

MIZZOU Magazine - Oh, say can you S-E-C

Story by Marcus Wilkins



With Mizzou's move to the Southeastern Conference, traveling Tiger fans can start circling destinations in the southland.

In **Gainesville, Fla.**, a gaggle of Gator grads paint their chests orange and blue before they chomp toward The Swamp. Due west on the bayou, Cajun chefs ignite crackling frog-leg fryers while stirring steaming stockpots of gumbo. Farther north, orange-clad captains traverse the Tennessee River seeking shore space for pregame parties.

No college league revels in its football tradition like the Southeastern Conference, where autumn Saturdays are holidays, and fans embrace tailgating with religious zeal. As Mizzou athletics enters its new home, what better time for an alumni road-trip renaissance.

The conference provides plenty to explore beyond the gridiron, and Columbia (Missouri or South Carolina) fits right in. Our sister 'villes — **Fayetteville, Gainesville, Knoxville, Nashville** and **Starkville**, to name a few — offer art, music, southern cuisine and scenic surroundings. And you can bet the cooler and charcoal that our new siblings will be dropping by CoMo en masse. **SEC fans love taking the show on the road** — Mizzou is increasing its visiting ticket allotment from approximately 3,800 to 6,000 — so it's a good thing I-55 is a two-way street.

"We're very excited about Mizzou's move to the SEC," says Amy Schneider, Columbia Convention and Visitors Bureau director. "It has given people a new awareness of tourism. We will have folks coming to Columbia who have never been here and may never have come here if it wasn't for the SEC."

Tiger fans have voiced enthusiasm about touring the SEC, too. The following pages provide a snapshot of each institution's history, traditions and sites you shouldn't miss.

[All photos courtesy of respective universities]



ALABAMA

Synonymous with college football pageantry and prestige, Bama has won 22 SEC titles and 14 national titles. In 1913, university President George H. Denny dubbed it "The Capstone" of higher education in the state.



ARKANSAS

The U of A is nestled on 345 acres overlooking the Ozark Mountains, and the state's flagship university is known for its business, engineering and nursing programs.



AUBURN

Established in 1856 as the East Alabama Male College, the school became the first land-grant college in the South and was renamed the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Alabama.



FLORIDA

UF traces its roots to East Florida Seminary in 1853, which opened in Ocala and moved to Gainesville in 1866. The Florida Agricultural College was chartered in 1870 and opened in Lake City in 1884.



GEORGIA

UGA became the first state-chartered university in America in 1785 and held classes in 1801 on the banks of the Oconee River in northeast Georgia.



KENTUCKY

UK traces its roots to Transylvania University (Lexington), which opened in 1783, and Kentucky University (Harrodsburg), which opened in 1858.



LOUISIANA STATE

Founded in 1860, the Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy near Pineville, La., burned in 1869, resumed classes in Baton Rouge and took the name Louisiana State University in 1870.



MISSISSIPPI

Chartered in 1844 and known affectionately as Ole Miss, it is home to an acclaimed Southern studies center and the national library of the accounting profession.



MISSISSIPPI STATE

Founded as the Agricultural and Mechanical College of the State of Mississippi in 1878, it was renamed Mississippi State College in 1932 and Mississippi State University in 1958.



MISSOURI

Established in 1839 as the first public university west of the Mississippi River. Mizzou is one of only five universities in the U.S. with law, medicine, veterinary medicine and a nuclear research reactor on one campus.



SOUTH CAROLINA

Founded as South Carolina College in 1801, the institution survived despite closing its doors during the Civil War and temporarily falling under Union possession. It became the University of South Carolina in 1865.



TENNESSEE

Established as Blount College before Tennessee's statehood, UT has been called East Tennessee College and East Tennessee University. The Knoxville campus is the flagship institution of the UT system.



TEXAS A&M

Texas A&M is a member of the Association of American Universities and the state's first public institution of higher education.



VANDERBILT

VU was established in 1873 with a \$1 million gift from Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt.

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