Boise History

It was French-Canadian fur trappers that gave Boise its name in the very early 1800's. Traveling through the high desert terrain, they came upon the valley, "Les Bois!" they exclaimed, meaning "Woods!" In 1834, Fort Boise, owned by the Hudson Bay Company, was established by British fur traders. The fort, now known as Old Fort Boise, was located at the mouth of the Boise River, 40 miles from present-day Boise.

In 1854, due to frequent Indian raids, the fort was abandoned. Despite this, the military desired to build another fort in the area, but, before this plan could go into effect, gold was discovered in the Boise Basin in 1862. It was now necessary, more than ever, to protect the vast number of travelers coming to the area.

Boise is Born

On July 4th, 1863, the military chose a location for the new Fort Boise and construction began soon afterward. A town site was located next to the fort, and with the protection of the military, the town grew quickly. A major reason for this growth, other than the gold rush, was its location along the Oregon Trail. Ada County was established as part of the Idaho Territory in 1864, with Boise as its county seat. The discovery of gold and the influx of emigrants along the Oregon Trail made Boise a supply stop central to the region.

During the frontier years, Boise enjoyed a thriving and productive Chinatown located in what is now downtown Boise. Many of the residents of that neighborhood came to Idaho to work in the mines or other support industries.

In 1890, Idaho was admitted as the 43rd state, and the City of Boise was chosen as its capital. In the early 1900's, Boise enjoyed rapid growth with the expansion of irrigation in the valley in 1902. This led to the construction of Arrowrock Dam, the tallest in the world from 1915 to 1932.

Basque Migration

In the late 1930's, Boise was graced with the massive migration of Basques from their native home in the Western Pyrenees Mountains. These proud people became shepherders, a large industry at the time, and gradually moved into the mainstream of city life in Boise, bringing their colorful culture with them. Today, Boise has the largest concentration of Basques per capita outside the Pyrenees Mountains.

As the Great Depression ravaged many cities in the nation, Boise enjoyed growth. And, during World War II, multitudes of airmen trained at Gowen Field, Boise's air base.

Boise Today

Boise has aptly become the premier city in the state leading in population, manufacturing, retailing and quality of life. Ada County prospers through Boise's strengths, as does the other cities in the metropolitan statistical area: Eagle, Garden City, Kuna, Meridian and the adjoining counties of Canyon and Elmore. Today, Boise is the largest metropolitan community in the state with more than 600,000 residents in the greater Boise area.

Numerous international, national, regional and state corporations have their headquarters in Boise. The city is the hub of commerce, banking and government for the state and is located midway between Salt Lake City and Portland.
DID YOU KNOW? BOISE EDITION...

- It’s pronounced “Boy-see,” not “Boy-zee.”
- The altitude of Boise is 2,730 feet.
- Boise’s nickname is City of Trees.
- Boise was crowned as the number one Adventure City in all of the United States by National Geographic.
- The Idaho statehouse in Boise is the only one in the United States geothermally heated from underground hot springs.
- Boise was named the #1 Mountain Biking Town by Bike Magazine.
- The Boise Valley is home to one of the oldest synagogues in the western United States.
- Once used as a dumping ground for raw sewage and industrial waste, Boise’s Greenbelt features 25 miles of scenic views, wildlife habitats and tree-lined pathways for year-round walking and biking.
- Boise State University’s bright blue turf was the first non-green American football field (below).
### Facts and Figures

#### Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOISE - ADA COUNTY</th>
<th>LEXINGTON-FAYETTE CO.</th>
<th>BOISE MSA REGION</th>
<th>BLUEGRASS REGION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>444,028</td>
<td>318,449</td>
<td>690,214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5 counties)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(8 counties)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Median Age (years)

|                    | 34.1                   | 34.4              | 36.2             | 36.1*            |

#### Racial Breakdown**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOISE - ADA COUNTY</th>
<th>LEXINGTON-FAYETTE CO.</th>
<th>BOISE MSA REGION</th>
<th>BLUEGRASS REGION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
<td>77.9%</td>
<td>86.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic**</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multirace**</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Educational

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pop. 25 Years +</th>
<th>% HS Graduate +</th>
<th>% Bach. degree +</th>
<th>% Advanced Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOISE - ADA COUNTY</td>
<td>297,773</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEXINGTON-FAYETTE CO.</td>
<td>206,147</td>
<td>90.2%</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOISE MSA REGION</td>
<td>452,788</td>
<td>91.4%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLUEGRASS REGION</td>
<td>402,563</td>
<td>87.4%*</td>
<td>34.0%*</td>
<td>14.6%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Civilian Labor Force</th>
<th>Major Employer</th>
<th>Major Employer Workers</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate (Jan. 2018)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOISE - ADA COUNTY</td>
<td>222,332</td>
<td>St. Luke's Regional Medical Center</td>
<td>9,000+</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEXINGTON-FAYETTE CO.</td>
<td>168,941</td>
<td>University of Kentucky</td>
<td>13,500</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOISE MSA REGION</td>
<td>330,451</td>
<td>St. Luke's Regional Medical Center</td>
<td>9,000+</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLUEGRASS REGION</td>
<td>330,126</td>
<td>University of Kentucky</td>
<td>13,500</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Income/Living

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Med. Household Income</th>
<th>Per Capita Income</th>
<th>Cost of Living (2017 Avg)</th>
<th>Median Home Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOISE - ADA COUNTY</td>
<td>$61,301</td>
<td>$32,174</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>$233,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEXINGTON-FAYETTE CO.</td>
<td>$53,178</td>
<td>$32,166</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>$181,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOISE MSA REGION</td>
<td>$55,162</td>
<td>$27,789</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$219,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLUEGRASS REGION</td>
<td>$53,769*</td>
<td>$26,606*</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$154,875*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Averages of Bluegrass Region counties; All other data from U.S. Census - American FactFinder ACS 1-year Data.

** U.S. Census denotes that Hispanics may be of any race, so that data is also included in applicable race categories.
Aquarium of Boise
64 North Cole Road, Boise 83704
Phone: (208) 375-1932
www.aquariumboise.net
The Aquarium of Boise strives to enhance the quality of life for all terrestrial and aquatic animals by teaching and inspiring people of all ages to better understand, care for, and conserve all life on our planet to ensure a greater future for us all. The 10,000 square foot facility houses over 35,000 gallons of salt-water and over 250 different species of animals and marine life. The collection includes animals that do not live in the ocean, but have come from local donations from the community. These animals include iguanas, freshwater turtles and fish, snakes and lizards. The aquarium is open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Boise Green Bike
700 NE 2nd St., Suite 100, Meridian 83642
Phone: (208) 345-7433
www.boise.greenbike.com
As Boise’s bike share system, Boise GreenBike provides people who live in, work in or visit Boise with a new mobility option. It’s a convenient and healthy way of getting from one place to another, all without contributing to traffic congestion or air pollution. Boise GreenBike uses the very latest technology to make your bike sharing experience simple and enjoyable. The rugged bikes are made by Social Bicycles, a New York based company on the cutting edge of mobility technology. The bikes and station hubs have been paid for with a federal grant, but operational funding comes from a combination of user fees, sponsorships, and advertising. Reserve a bike directly from your mobile device, accessing an app from the Boise Green Bike web site.

Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial
770 S. 8th Street, Boise 83702
Phone: (208) 345-0304
Located along the Greenbelt in downtown Boise, the Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial opened in 2002 as an educational park designed to engage visitors to reflect, think and engage one another on human rights issues. Both the triumphs and tragedies of the human story are on display, but in every quote and every idea, we see the profound power of a single voice or bold action to overcome great odds and alter the course of history. The walls of the Memorial contain over 60 quotes from the world’s humanitarian leaders. Water features combine with serene landscaping to create a quiet and welcoming place for thought and inspiration. The Memorial is the only Anne Frank Memorial in the United States and one of the few places in the world where the full Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is on permanent, public display. Visiting the Memorial is free of charge, and is open to everyone.

Idaho Black History Museum
508 Julia Davis Drive, Boise 83702
Phone: (208) 789-2164
www.ibhm.org
Housed in the historic St. Paul Baptist Church building and located in Boise Julia Davis Park, the museum presents exhibits and provides educational and community outreach programs including lectures, films, workshops, literacy programs, and musical performances. The museum’s purpose is to build bridges between cultures to explore issues that affect Americans of all cultures and ethnicity. Hours are Tuesday from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., and Wednesday & Thursday, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
MORE THINGS TO DO

Idaho Botanical Garden
2355 Old Penitentiary Road, Boise 83712
Phone: (208) 343-8649
www.idahobotanicalgarden.org

Located in Boise’s Old Penitentiary Historic District, the Idaho Botanical Garden is home to over 800 species of plants, from 42 families, located in 14 specialty gardens. It provides enriching garden experiences through educational programs, botanical collections, a variety of entertainment, cultural and community events. It is also a refreshing and inspiring year-round outdoor destination for local residents and out-of-town visitors. Garden hours are Monday through Sunday, 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Idaho Museum of Military History
4692 W. Harvard Street, Boise 83705
Phone: (208) 272-4841
https://museum.mil.idaho.gov

Covering a broad spectrum of military history, via photos and artifacts, you will see Gowen Field as it was during World War II as well as Idahoans in the Philippine Insurrection through Operation Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom. A number of small arms are on display as are many of the guidons from units past, some of which have felt the breezes of distant lands and date back to the early years of the 20th century. There are also exhibits on both the Idaho Air and Army National Guard as well as Mountain Home Air Force Base, the United States Marines and the U.S. Navy. A collection of armored vehicles is in the outdoor compound. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 4:00 p.m.

Idaho State Capital
700 W. Jefferson Street, Boise 83702
Phone: (208) 332-1013
www.capitolcommission.idaho.gov

Over 100 years since conception, the Capitol continues to function as the seat of Idaho’s state government, currently housing the executive and legislative branches and numerous state offices, which occupy much of the approximately 111,600 square feet of usable space. The Capitol and its surrounding grounds occupy two blocks of the urban grid, providing grounds proportional to the building’s roughly 328-foot north and south facades and its depth of approximately 170 feet established by the east/west axis. Capitol hours are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Idaho Museum of Military History
4692 W. Harvard Street, Boise 83705
Phone: (208) 272-4841
https://museum.mil.idaho.gov

Covering a broad spectrum of military history, via photos and artifacts, you will see Gowen Field as it was during World War II as well as Idahoans in the Philippine Insurrection through Operation Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom. A number of small arms are on display as are many of the guidons from units past, some of which have felt the breezes of distant lands and date back to the early years of the 20th century. There are also exhibits on both the Idaho Air and Army National Guard as well as Mountain Home Air Force Base, the United States Marines and the U.S. Navy. A collection of armored vehicles is in the outdoor compound. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 4:00 p.m.

Old Idaho Penitentiary
2445 Old Penitentiary Road, Boise 83712
Phone: (208) 334-2844
https://history.idaho.gov/oldpen

The Old Idaho Penitentiary opened its doors in 1872 to some of the West’s most desperate criminals. Today, visitors can experience over 100 years of Idaho’s unique prison history with a visit to Solitary Confinement, cell blocks, and the Gallows. The site features thirty historic buildings and special exhibitions including the J. Curtis Earl Memorial Exhibit of Arms and Armaments. Regular hours each day are noon to 5:00 p.m. (last admission at 4:15 p.m.)

Zoo Boise
355 N. Julia Davis Drive, Boise 83702
Phone: (208) 608-7760
www.zooboise.org

Zoo Boise is one of the most popular attractions in Southern Idaho, as well as a living science facility that is home to over 300 animals from 100 various species. Zoo Boise is a service of the City of Boise and is supported by the Friends of Zoo Boise, a 501(c)(3) membership organization that supports Zoo Boise in the area of animal acquisition, capital improvement projects, education programs, volunteer opportunities, and special events. The goal of each of these components is to increase public awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of the zoo, wild animals, animal habitats, species conservation, and the environment.

Photo Courtesy of Boise Convention & Visitors Bureau