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Gettysburg named among the top destinations in the country

Gettysburg, Pa., is grabbing some much-deserved attention in the U.S. travel industry.

The vacation destination has been named among the best places to visit whether it's students, families or tour groups.

In January, Gettysburg was named one of the "15 places every kid should visit" by Budget Travel magazine. "It's never too early to learn about the sacrifices of those who came before," the article read. It mentions both the Gettysburg National Military Park and the Soldiers' National Cemetery.

In February, Gettysburg ranked 29th in the "Top 50 Motorcoach Destinations," a ranking conducted by the National Motorcoach Network. The annual survey is based on responses received from motorcoach charter and tour operators and where they plan to bring their tours in 2008. Pennsylvania was ranked 5th among the "Top 20 Motorcoach States."

In May, Gettysburg will be named among the Top 10 destinations by the Student and Youth Travel Association. The rankings were determined by a survey of SYTA tour operator members and research by the Student and Youth Travel Research Institute.

Countryside Tours Inc., from Sand Lake, Mich., has been taking students to Gettysburg for 26 years, said President Sandy Strom Dryer.

"When it comes to history and student travel, Gettysburg has it all – safe streets, clean, safe, affordable hotels who are always willing to work with groups. Gettysburg has a variety of restaurants with affordable prices and lots of great shopping for Civil War memorabilia. I can't wait to see what the new Visitor Center has to offer."

Norris Flowers, President of the Gettysburg Convention & Visitors Bureau, believes the recent attention is a direct result of recent marketing efforts.

"I'm pleased to see our marketing strategies are receiving such positive results," Flowers said. "And this should result in more visitors and an increased impact on the local economy."

In the past few years, several new attractions, restaurant and accommodations have helped Gettysburg become a top destination of the country. And with many more attractions, like the new Gettysburg Museum and Visitor Center and David Wills House, scheduled to open this year, there's even more reason to visit Gettysburg.

“Gettysburg continues to be a strong seller for our groups,” said Shane Lauler, Vice President and General Manager of Tours for Starr Tours, of Trenton, N.J. “Gettysburg has the perfect blend of history and charm and continues to add new experiences. There is really something here for everyone.”

The Gettysburg Convention & Visitors Bureau spends more than 60 percent of its budget, or \$800,000, to market Gettysburg and Adams County as a premier tourist destination. In 2005, more than \$310 million was spent by visitors in Adams County. The local tourism industry, either directly or indirectly, employs about 7,200 people.

For more information, contact Carl Whitehill, Media Relations Manager with the Gettysburg Convention & Visitors Bureau, at (717) 338-1055.