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#### left to right) Stadium. home to baseball's Cardinals; the Art **Forest** Park: downtown St Louis:

Gateway

creates a

stunning

skyscape

and (top.

# Like Tina, Chuck and Miles... I found my thrill

t's not often one can say a trip was nearly 40 years in the planning. However, as I stood underneath the Gateway Arch in St Louis, the city where Chuck Berry, Miles Davis and Tina Turner all honed their craft. my mind wandered back to childhood

When I wasn't engrossed in an Oor Wullie or Broons annual, I read through a series of World Books. For younger readers, this was long before the advent of Google, or even the internet, so we relied on such books to learn about the world!

The Gateway Arch was classed as one of the seven wonders of the modern world and my young mind was intrigued by the structure and setting.

The arch has been part of the St Louis cityscape since 1968 and, until 2018, was separated

from the downtown area of the city by a six-lane freeway. The opening, last year, of the Gateway Arch Park has removed that separation.

Now visitors can wander from the Arch and its fascinating underground museum, to the old Courthouse and the Keiner Plaza in a few minutes

Due to its stainless steel construction, the Arch appears to change constantly. At first light, it seems to awaken with the city. At night, the lighting creates an ethereal effect as it reflects in the nearby river.

The Mississippi played a huge role in the development of St Louis and a huge tableau on the floor of the Gateway Arch Museum shows how St Louis is

at the epicentre of river routes that connect the United States. The Illinois and Missouri rivers converge with the Mississippi just a few miles upstream. The historic expansion west

BY DAVID GORDON

led by explorers Lewis and Clark, ensured St Louis was central to the development of the US.

This is marked by a waterfall and statues that create a talking point in the fover of the Drury Plaza Hotel at the Arch, our base in the city

St Louis became the crossroads of the country, with a huge mix of people travelling through or settling there. The National Blues Museum

tells the story of the early migrants who brought the genre to the growing city. When

mixed with the ragtime styles that already existed, and jazz brought upriver from New Orleans, St Louis Blues was born. Today, venues like BB's Jazz and Blues & Soup are national institutions.

Life in the city appears to centre around the Delmar Loop and West End areas.

This is where the historic university, the ornate homes of Millionaires Row and the huge expanse of Forest Park

Delmar Loop comes to life at night, with venues like Blueberry Hill, where Chuck Berry performed until only a few years ago.

The more sedate Chase Park Plaza Hotel once welcomed Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr and every US

president since 1922. Route 66 is another facet of history in the St Louis region. The famous road makes its way from Chicago through outlying towns like Hamel, where you can dine in Weezy's, a real smalltown diner, or Staunton, where you can visit Henrys Rabbit Ranch or the nearby Pink

66 memorabilia. The Scots diaspora is also represented. The historic village of Elsah, built between the bluffs along the Great River Road, was founded by a

Elephant Mall, which has an

eclectic collection of Route

Scottish family They named the village after the last piece of Scotland they saw as they began their journey, Ailsa Craig, the granite outcrop in the Firth of Clvde

Visiting the local store, the village museum and staying



St Louis takes the crown when it comes to free attractions. making it very tourist and budget-friendly. St Louis Zoo. Missouri History Cahokia State Mounds and the St Louis **Science Centre** are just some of the places to ao. See explorestlouis com for the full

list.

at the Green Tree Inn bring that history to life.

Route 66 enters St Louis at the Chain of Rocks Bridge and there are well-known places to stop before heading into rural

Ted Drewes Frozen Custard is one. They have been serving their ice cream for more than 60 years

St Louis is a city with much to offer the visitor and, as an added bonus, many attractions are free It was my first visit, but most definitely not my last.

### Factfile

United flies from Glasgow and Edinburgh to St Louis (via Newark or Chicago). We stayed at the Drury Plaza at the Arch in St Louis and at the Green Tree Inn in Elsah.

## 48 hours in



### Stay

Germany's second largest city has something for everyone, from the buzzing nightlife of the LGBTQ-friendly St Georg neighbourhood to the beautiful Old Town, where you can enjoy picturesque canalside walks.

If you plan on treating yourself to a weekend of luxury, book a room at The Fontenay, a modern five-star hotel on the Outer Alster lake. Prices start from €320 per night, but you'll wake every morning to glorious views

With its handy, central location, hotel Tortue is a good option for tourists hoping to see the city on foot. The traditional building has been beautifully updated, with rooms and suites both available.

### Eat

As well as cuisine from around the world, Hamburg boasts plenty of traditional eateries where you can really taste the city's heritage.

Popular with locals, Laufauf serves up fresh fish. casseroles and classic German dishes, as well as delicious beer and wine. It's a casual place where you'll feel every inch the

For a night to remember, opt for the modern Mediterranean food at trendy Bianc in HafenCity, part of the Hamburg-Mitte district. Order the nine-course Emotions menu, which brings food to life by "evoking gastronomical

### Drink

Have you heard of Hamburg's Reeperbahn? It's just as big and just as wild as Amsterdam's Red Light district, and in German is known as die sündigste Meile, or the sinful mile.

Zum Silbersack is one of the most famous watering holes there, and serves up cheap drinks and loud music, alongside vibrant clientele. Warning: expect sticky floors.

For an overview of the city's past, present and future, take a guided tour of the Rathaus City Hall. The building holds an estimated 647 rooms. but it is thought there could be more, as a secret room was only found when a document fell behind a filing cabinet.

Spanning 260,000 square metres, Speicherstadt – or warehouse city – is a must-visit. The UNESCO World Heritage Site has many cafes, tourist hotspots and picture-perfect views.