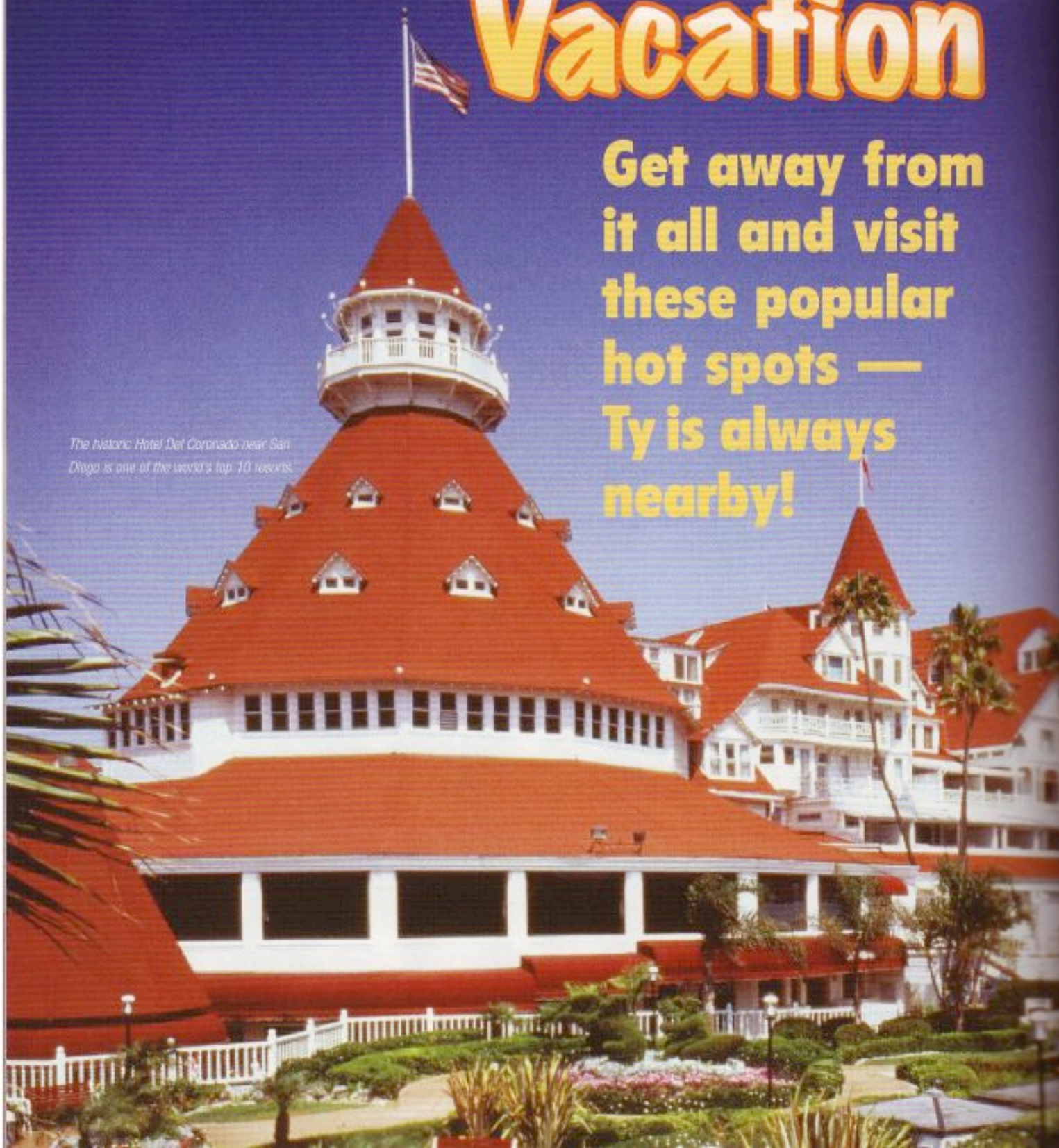


Ty Family

Vacation

**Get away from
it all and visit
these popular
hot spots —
Ty is always
nearby!**

The historic Hotel Del Coronado near San Diego is one of the world's top 10 resorts.



Family vacations are famous for their souvenirs. Lighters shaped like the Statue of Liberty. Coins embossed with an imprint of Mount Rushmore. Seashells from the Pacific Ocean and T-shirts — one size fits all — that declare “I Love Florida” in bold print across the chest.

“People come into town and they want the typical tourist thing, the silver spoon or the keychain,” says Ken Robinson, owner of Games People Play, a specialty toy store in Sausalito, Calif., “but they take it home and they don’t remember [their vacation]. It’s the thing that they buy at my store that makes them say, ‘I remember that!’ because it’s sitting on a shelf or on a table; it’s something unusual.”

That’s why Beanies make such great mementos, he says. Whether you’re out of town on business or taking a much-needed family vacation, retailers recommend taking home Ty because the price is right, the quality is high and, thanks to an infinite variety of product, the memories are limitless.

Also, as well-traveled collectors will tell you, Beanies are everywhere! No matter if you’re walking across the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, shopping in Savannah, Ga., dining in New Orleans or sunbathing in San Diego, Ty is close by with Beanies for the entire family.

By Matt Alderton

Wish You Were Here!



Sausalito, Calif.

Across the bay from San Francisco, on the north side of the Golden Gate Bridge, is Sausalito, enjoyed by locals and tourists alike as a Mediterranean-style village with consistently gorgeous weather and spectacular views.

"It's very, very beautiful here," Robinson says. "We know nothing about weather [changing]!"

But they do know a lot about fun. For the kids, there is the Bay Area Discovery Museum, located beneath the Golden Gate Bridge. For adults, there is wine tasting at Bacchus & Venus in downtown Sausalito, the gateway to California wine country. San Francisco is just a ferry ride away. There families can see Alcatraz, ride the city's historic streetcars, visit the Wax Museum at Fisherman's Wharf or take a carousel ride at Pier 39.

Vacationing Beanie-lovers will find Robinson and his store, Games People Play, at 695 Bridgeway in historic Sausalito, steps from the waterfront. It is one in a pair of toy stores: Sausalito Ferry features modern and edgy toys, while Games People Play is a traditional toy store that Robinson describes as "soft and friendly." The latter is where he sells his Beanies.

"We [sell] a lot of Ty," he says. "I think we've got every available Beanie Baby there is."

Robinson displays his Beanies on the sales floor, but he also uses them as décor — he's got 30 linear feet of Beanies displayed behind his cash register.

"They're beautiful," says Carol Hayes, the store's Ty buyer. Every month she compares what the store has in stock with what Ty currently is offering. "If there's anything I don't have, I pick it up."

The greatest thing about selling Beanies in Sausalito, she says, is the people she meets, who come from all over the world to stop in and shop.

"It's a nice little spot," she remarks. "They always describe it as paradise."

San Diego

Down the California coast, near the Mexican border, is San Diego, California's second largest city. It is known for its beaches — 70 miles' worth — and its wealth of family attractions, including SeaWorld and the world-famous San Diego Zoo, home to 4,000 rare and endangered birds, mammals and reptiles, as well as 6,500 varieties of exotic plants.

A short drive from the San Diego Zoo, at 102 Horton Plaza in downtown San Diego, is Cynthia's Hallmark, which carries the full line of Ty products.

"We have probably the best selection of Beanie Babies I've seen in a Hallmark store," says Kathy Epps, corporate trainer and merchandiser. "And we have 12 other stores we can access if you can't find what you're looking for." Epps says Ty is always on the store's best-seller list. California is its most recent top seller, followed by

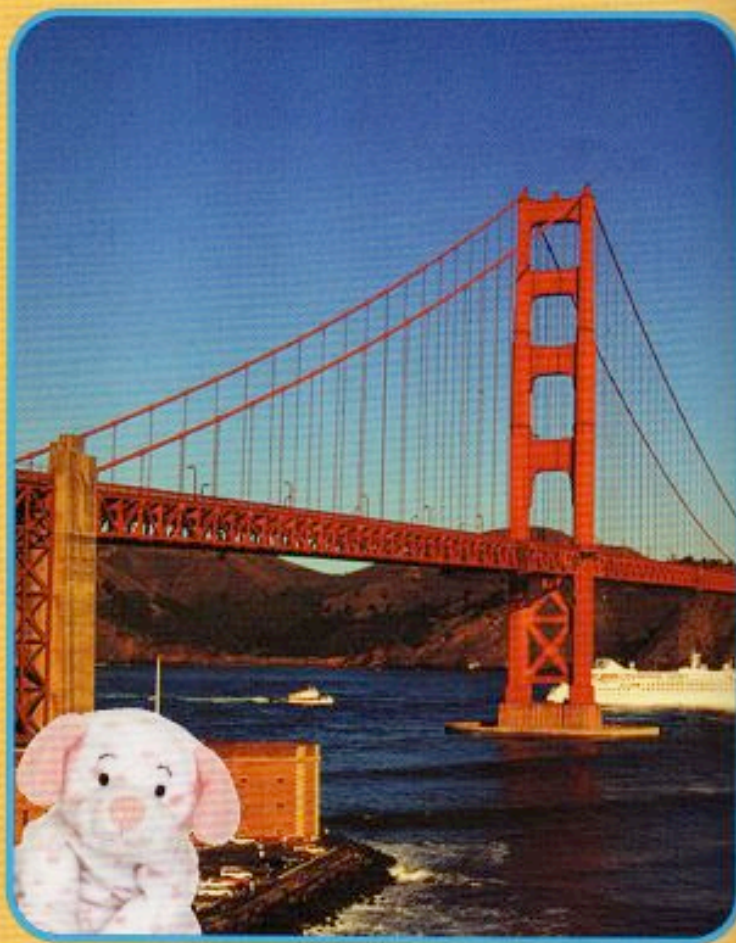
Happy Birthday and Ronnie, who did particularly well, she says, because the USS Ronald Reagan is ported in San Diego.

Just five miles west is the island town of Coronado. Among its largest attractions are the Ferry Landing Marketplace, with seaside shopping, sprawling views of San Diego, 15-minute ferry rides to the mainland and the historic Hotel Del Coronado, which dates back to 1888. Named one of the top 10 resorts in the world by *USA Today*, the Hotel Del has counted Marilyn Monroe, Frank Sinatra and every sitting president since Lyndon Johnson among its guests.

At 930 Orange Ave., a stroll away from the Hotel Del, is Freddy's Teddies & Toys, the only toy store in town, according to owner John Mullen. It also is one of Ty's largest area retailers.

"I've never seen anyone anywhere display as much Ty as I do," Mullen says. He claims to have all of Ty's current releases on display, as well as many retired Beanies. He recently purchased \$700 worth of old Beanies to sell in his store. It's that mixture of new and old that he says makes Freddy's Teddies & Toys truly unique.

"It's a museum inside a toy store," he says. "Everyone likes the store, from a one-year-old to a 100-year-old."



Sunny Sausalito, Calif., is situated on the San Francisco Bay, at the foot of the Golden Gate Bridge.

Photo courtesy of the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau

New Orleans

With all the ruckus of Bourbon Street and Mardi Gras, New Orleans doesn't exactly have a family-friendly reputation. But with more than 35,000 buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places, not to mention heaps of interesting food and Creole culture, there's more to the Big Easy than meets the eye.

The Audubon Zoo, Aquarium of the Americas, Ripley's Believe It Or Not, the National D-Day Museum, Six Flags New Orleans and street car rides, as well as steamboat cruises and numerous swamp, ghost and history tours, are all fun and interesting ways to entertain — and educate — the family.

The Little Toy Shop, which has two locations in New Orleans, at 513 St. Ann St. in Jackson Square and 900 Decatur in the French Market building, claims to be the only toy store in the French Quarter.

"The stores have been here, family-owned, since 1954," says manager Monique Matranga. "They really don't have many things in this area for children, so that makes us special."

General manager Bill Gingrow says the stores began carrying Ty in the early 1990s because it made an alligator that was popular with tourists, who he estimates make up 90 percent of the store's clientele.

"We have people from all over the world who are going to take things home and say, 'Look what I found in New Orleans!'" he says.

"It would be great if Ty did a New Orleans Beanie!" Matranga says.

Savannah, Ga.

Located in the heart of the South, Savannah calls itself the Southern Belle of the Georgia coast, "elegant and refined, yet secretive and seductive."

Savannah boasts more than 45 attractions. Cultural tours include one focused around "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil," the award-winning book set in Savannah, and several tours focusing on African-American heritage and the Civil War — not to mention pirates and ghosts, as Savannah claims to be America's Most Haunted City. Savannah is home to three forts and a surviving plantation from the Civil War era, the popular River Street shopping district, situated along the Savannah River, and scenic beaches at Tybee Island, 20 minutes outside the city.

Alan Sadler operates two popular toy stores in the area: Blackbeard's Booty on River Street and The Magic Puppet in nearby Hilton Head, S.C. Sadler says Ty is a consistent seller at each of his stores. And he offers tourists something he says is especially hard to come by: a public bathroom!

Nearby, at 305 E. River St., is Baskets, Bears & T's ... Oh My! Owner Carol Devine has changed the store's name twice in its 32-year history. She likes to keep things fresh. But Ty, she

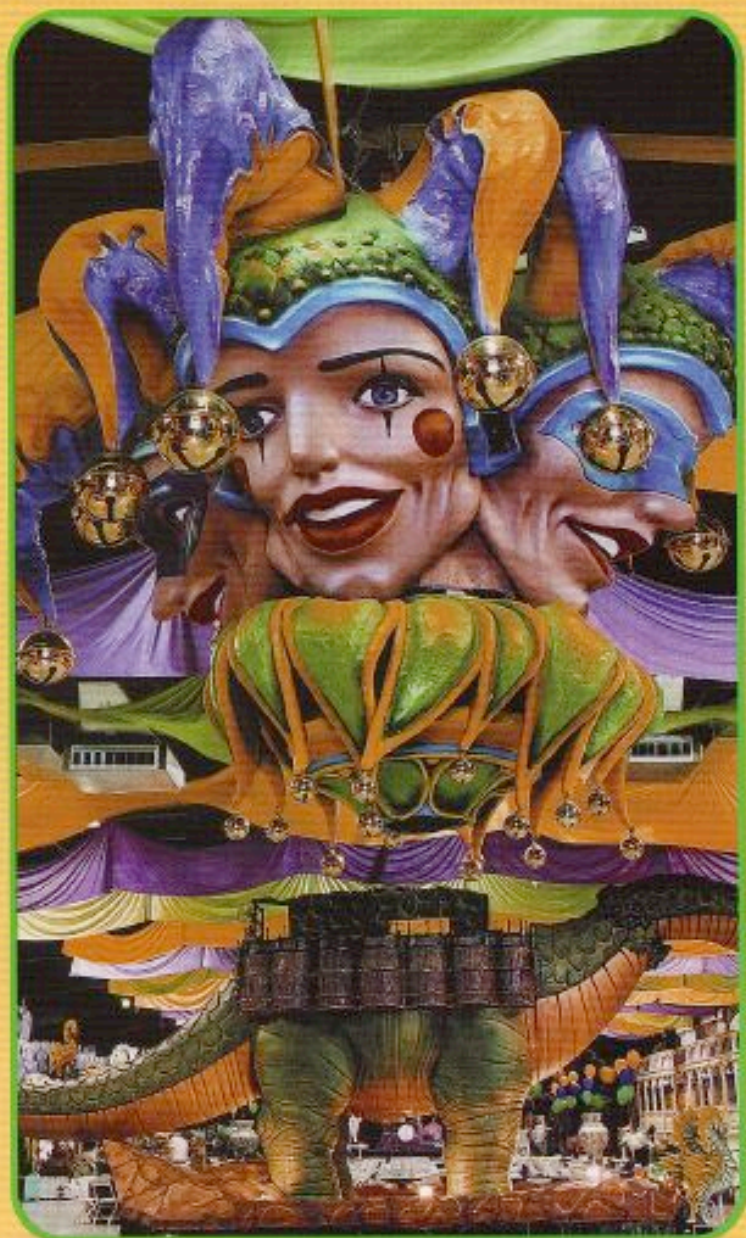


Photo courtesy of Brian Kern's Mardi Gras World and NewOrleansOnline.com.

New Orleans is most famous for its annual Mardi Gras celebration, which draws thousands of visitors every year to witness its elaborate parade floats, creative costumes and vibrant carnival culture.

says, is one thing she can count on to stay the same. She is especially fond of Classics and Pluffies.

"It sells," she says. "I like the quality. I think they're innovative. (Ty Warner) is very good at what he does."

Baskets, Bears & T's specializes in whimsical gifts of every sort, everything from cookie jars to T-shirts. Its children's section, however, is a favorite among collectors — and Devine.

"We have a nice children's section because I have two grandchildren and I want them to have nice things," she says.

It's the nice people, though, that keep tourists flocking to Savannah, where you can get a hefty dose of Southern hospitality and the latest Beanies.

Fairbanks, Alaska

Up north — way north — Fairbanks, Alaska, is located in the heart of the Alaskan wilderness. Remarkable for its long summer days — and short winter ones! — Fairbanks is a wonderful and unique destination for families.

During the summer, Fairbanks offers a plethora of tours and activities. One of the most popular is a cruise aboard the Riverboat Discovery on the Chena River, a three-and-a-half-hour nature tour that includes a trip to an authentic Athabaskan Indian village. In the winter, visitors can witness the beautiful Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights, a celestial phenomenon of colored lights that appears in the sky over the earth's arctic and Antarctic regions.

They can also watch one of Alaska's famous dogsled races, one of which runs right past Arctic Travelers Gift Shop at 201 Cushman St., where the locals flock for all things Beanie.

Marcy Croteau, a sales clerk in charge of ordering Ty products, calls herself the store's resident "Beanicologist." A collector herself, she also tends to the shop's one-of-a-kind Beanie Museum — an entire 12-ft. wall dedicated to a display of almost 500 Beanies past and present.

"We get a lot of people who want to buy them," Croteau says, "but they're not for sale."

Louisville, Ky.

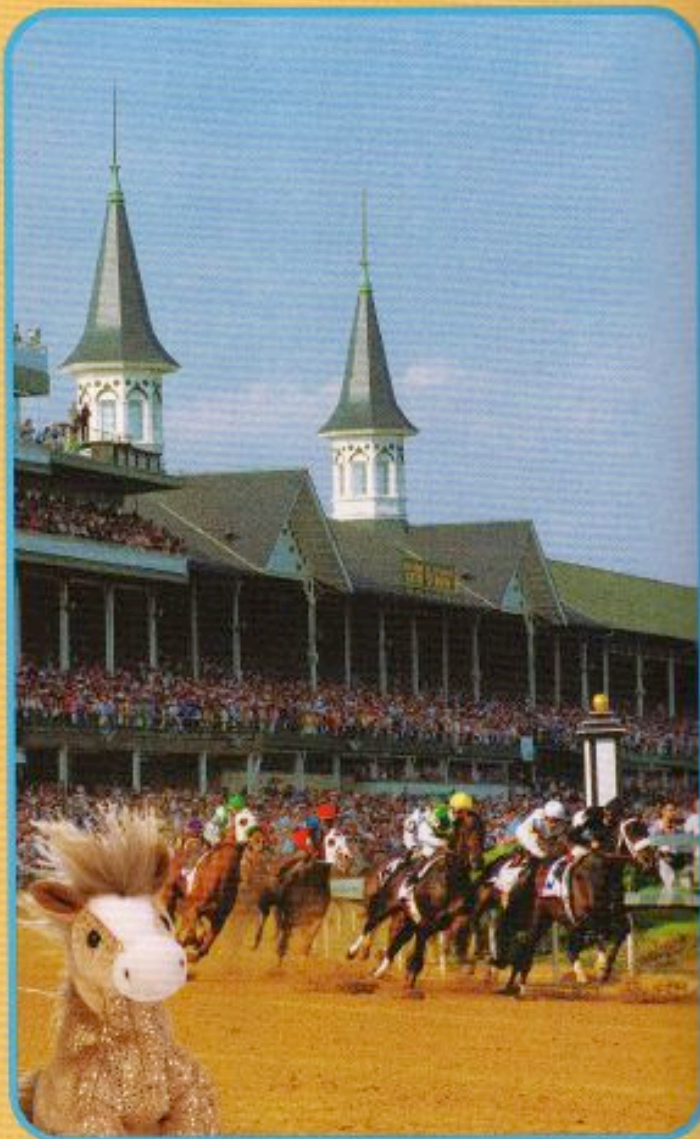
Louisville, Ky., is famous for the Kentucky Derby, the nation's premiere horse race. In 1875, a crowd of 10,000 turned out to watch the first Kentucky Derby.

The derby's famed track, Churchill Downs, isn't just a hot spot for placing bets; it's also a fun destination for families. The Kentucky Derby Museum features several hands-on exhibits, including one that allows patrons to simulate the experience of being jockeys in their own races.

Every year, two weeks prior to the Derby, Louisville hosts the Derby Festival, which attracts more than 1.5 million visitors and features more than 70 events, most of which are free. The festival begins with the opening ceremony, Thunder Over Louisville, which claims to be the nation's largest annual fireworks extravaganza. Other events in the ensuing weeks include sports, concerts, dances, a parade and numerous just-for-kids activities, such as balloon races.

Ten minutes from Churchill Downs at 1100 Trevilian Way is the Louisville Zoo, home to one of the area's most popular Ty retailers, the Beargrass Trading Co. gift shop.

The Louisville Zoo opened in 1969 and is home to more than 1,300 animals. Ronald Haseker, manager of the Beargrass gift shop, says he sells more Beanies than that — between 1,500 and 2,000 — every month.



The Kentucky Derby has been the nation's most popular horse race — and Louisville's most popular attraction — for more than 130 years.

The store sells T-shirts, rubber snakes and sweatshirts, but 60 percent of its sales are in plush.

"We're really family-oriented," he says. "We're not a Disney World or an Animal Kingdom, but it's very educational and you can always pick something up at the gift shop to remind you of your vacation."

So, forget the funny lighters and the pretty postcards. On your next family vacation, think about stopping by the local toy store and picking out something you'll actually display and remember.

We have the perfect suggestion: Ty!