



# Hog Heaven

## Harley museum must-see in Milwaukee



**TRAVEL**

**Peter Wilson**

exhibits are arranged chronologically, beginning with Serial Number One, the oldest known Harley-Davidson in existence. The machine was the wide-eyed hope of the company founders William S. Harley and Walter and Arthur Davidson, who built the first bike in a 10 feet by 15 feet Milwaukee shed, where they began operations in 1903. From this machine, visitors travel a journey leading them to the latest production models crafted today.

One of its newest pieces of inventory is the Second World War replica that was used in the recently released Captain America movie starring Chris Evans and Tommy Lee Jones. Harley-Davidson worked with filmmaker Marvel Studios to painstakingly recreate five of the bikes used in the movie.

There's even a replica of this bike in the museum's foyer, where visitors can climb aboard to get their picture taken next to the movie poster.

There are some powerful exhibits, including a series of machines celebrating bike customization. One of the most dramatic is the "King Kong," a whimsical creation by Felix Predko, who built the 13-foot-long motorcycle with two in-line engines and added numerous decorative details.

For lovers of country and western music, there's a machine completely fitted with glittering rhinestones planted on its entire surface. The female owner of one of the bikes on display introduced an eye-catching steel bike-rest to her bike. Shaped like an elegant leg clad in a fishnet stocking, the steel-bike support grabs as much attention as the Harley.

Filling the exhibit rooms, police bikes, U.S. military-service motor bikes, complete with authentic-looking machine guns, and grocery delivery bikes show how the company's market strategy developed much further than purely servicing individual consumers. This museum tells not only the stories of its products, but of the extraordinary people involved in H-D's history and its culture.

One of the most famous bikes on display is the 1956 Model KH, which Elvis Presley purchased in 1956 just before he was about to release his No. 1 hit Heartbreak Hotel.



The exhibit even has the original purchase agreement signed by the King himself. The \$1,400 or so he paid for his shiny machine must have trimmed his wallet pretty good in those days.

It's estimated that about 350,000 people

visit the museum annually, many of them repeat customers. The museum is particularly popular with families, who, by introducing their offspring to the Harley-Davidson experience, are no doubt kick-starting new generations towards the love of motorcycling.

### Harley-Davidson Museum

400 Canal Street, Milwaukee, WI

Open:

Sunday to Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Thursday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Adults \$16, Children (5 -17) \$10, Children (under 5) free, Seniors \$12

Phone: (877) 436-8738

Website: [www.h-dmuseum.com](http://www.h-dmuseum.com)

For more information on other attractions in Milwaukee: [www.visitmilwaukee.org](http://www.visitmilwaukee.org)

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