



Cape Girardeau, Missouri



Cape Girardeau, Missouri, began as a tiny trading post on the Mississippi River. It was established by a French soldier, Ensign Jean Girardot, for whom the city is named.

Museums include the Cape River Heritage Museum, which features changing exhibits about people and events from southeast Missouri; the Rosemary Berkel and Harry L. Crisp II Museum, which has collections in archaeology, history, and fine arts; the Discovery Playhouse—A Children’s Museum; the historic Glenn House, which has restored rooms that depict life around 1900; and the Red House Interpretive Center, which commemorates the visit of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to Cape Girardeau.

Numerous murals reflect the area’s history and heritage. The largest, the Mississippi River Tales Mural, is located on the downtown floodwall that spans the length of the downtown shopping district and features 24 panels that tell a portion of Cape Girardeau’s history. Other murals include the Southeast Missourian’s Tile Murals, the Coca-Cola Mural, the University Mural, the Bicentennial Mural, the Heritage of Music Mural, and the Missouri Wall of Fame Mural.

Donald C. Bedell Performance Hall on the River Campus of Southeast Missouri State University hosts productions by Southeast Missouri State University and touring acts. The Show Me Center is a venue for entertainment and sports events, including Southwest Missouri State basketball games and PRCA rodeos.

NEIGHBORHOODS

The downtown area has experienced redevelopment and the upper stories of some commercial buildings have been transformed into residences.

Cape Girardeau is not characterized by defined, named neighborhoods, with the exception of the Sunset area near Southeast Missouri Hospital. This older neighborhood has many bungalow-style houses. Most of the residences in Cape Girardeau are single-family, detached houses, although some are duplexes or multifamily developments. Residential design, size, age, and use of exterior building materials differ greatly across the city. In the older parts of the city, houses are located on narrow, deep lots situated along traditional grid-patterned streets. The newer, large-scale subdivisions cover many acres of land and are generally similar in size and layout. These subdivisions are built on streets laid out in irregular patterns. Dalhousie Golf Club is a golf-course community that will comprise single-family and town houses. Various other new subdivisions are planned along Route W, and other new subdivisions are being completed and developed in the northwestern part of the city, as well as outlying areas of the county. The city has annexed several of these outlying subdivisions.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The city of Cape Girardeau maintains 23 parks that offer biking, fishing, sports, and other activities. The largest park is the Shawnee Park Sports Complex, which has 12 soccer fields and 6 softball fields. Another of the large parks, Arena Park, contains the A.C. Brase Arena, 10 shelters, 60 picnic tables, 16 softball and baseball fields, 4 tennis courts, 2 sand volleyball courts, and a rugby field. Capaha Park is the oldest park in Cape Girardeau’s system and is located near Southeast Missouri State University.

Facilities include Capaha Municipal Pool, a basketball court, 3 play structures, shelters, a bandshell, the Rose Garden, a fishing pond, and 3 baseball fields, one of which is home to the Southeast Missouri State University Redhawks and the Capahas, a semiprofessional baseball team. Cape Rock Park, a mainly undeveloped park, is the site of the original trading post and offers a view of the Mississippi River. Fort D is the only remaining Civil War fort of the four that protected Cape Girardeau from Confederate attack. The Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center is located within North County Park and features the "White Oak Trace," two miles of nature trails.

The Lazy L Safari Park, which began as an alternative livestock ranch, contains hundreds of exotic animals and over 20 different species.

EDUCATION

The Cape Girardeau Public School District educates approximately 4,000 students in five elementary schools (kindergarten–grade 4), one middle school (grades 5 and 6), one junior high school (grades 7 and 8), and one high school (grades 9–12). In addition, the district operates a vocational high school.

Southeast Missouri State University offers 200 areas of undergraduate study and many graduate programs. The Southeast Missouri Hospital College of Nursing & Health Sciences specializes in preparing persons for health care careers. Metro Business College prepares students for careers in business, health care, and information technology.

HEALTH CARE

Two state-of-the-art hospitals with a total of over 500 beds are located in the city.

CITY STATS

2008

City Population	37,370
Metropolitan Statistical Area	93,287
Per Capita Personal Income, Cape Girardeau-Jackson, MO-IL MSA	\$31,926