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Convention South

28 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE. ANSWERS. INSIGHT.

Where To Hop
On A Free
Ride!
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The New & Renovated Issue

- 8 Hot Venue Trends
- New & Refreshed Facilities
- What's Happening At CVBs



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Columbia CVB

Riverbanks Zoo and Gardens

Meet On The **Wild** Side

Twice awarded the Governor's Cup as South Carolina's Most Outstanding Tourist Attraction, **Riverbanks Zoo and Gardens** sits on both banks of the Saluda River, connected by a pedestrian bridge. The 170-acre facility is home to more than 2,000 animals and more than 4,300 species of plants. According to information from the zoo, event space ranges from the Magnolia Room in the formal gardens, to Ndoki Lodge that overlooks the elephant enclosure. The zoo can accommodate up to 350 for receptions and up to 170 for seated dinners.

Where To Meet

- Since opening four years ago, the **Hilton Columbia Center**, with 222 guest rooms and 6,000 square feet of event space, has consistently ranked in the top five for Hilton Brands worldwide, said General Manager Tony Tam. "We get top ratings for everything guest related, and we're very proud of that. We're a new property and everything is state-of-the-art, including complimentary wireless high-speed Internet access throughout the hotel."
- Located on campus, the **Inn at USC** has 117 guestrooms and suites and more than 3,000 square feet of event space, including six meeting rooms and a large courtyard.
- The **Clarion Hotel Downtown** is still enjoying renovations that were completed in 2009, said Jennifer Shy, director of sales. "We're a full-service hotel in a great central downtown location, with 160 guest rooms and 9,300 square feet of flexible event space."
- The 8,200-seat **Carolina Stadium**, home to the University of South Carolina Gamecocks, opened in 2009, and "The Perch," the upper-level concourse area is a popular spot for receptions when the stadium is not being used for Gamecocks baseball, according to the CVB.
- **300 Senate** features a large deck that overlooks the Congaree River, with seating for 60 guests in a private dining room and a ballroom that can accommodate up to 250 for receptions, said owner Dupre Percival of Dupre Catering and Events. ■

C O L U M B I A

EDITOR'S **HOT PICKS**

COLUMBIA is a stately Southern city and the state capital of South Carolina. Easily accessible at the intersection of U.S. Interstates 26 and 20, the city has a strong business and medical community and is home to the University of South Carolina.

FLEXIBLE SPACES!

The 142,500-square-foot Midlands Authority Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center opened in 2004 and provides flexible expo, banquet, breakout and prefunction spaces, including a 24,700-square-foot exhibit hall and a 17,135-square-foot ballroom. Take a virtual tour online.

www.columbiaconventioncenter.com

COMFORTABLE MEETINGS!

The 40,000-square-foot Columbia Conference Center offers state-of-the-art technology with 20,000 square feet of meeting space. Attendee comfort is a main attribute of the facility where chairs are well-padded and offer lumbar support.

www.columbiameetings.com

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