



PHOTOGRAPHS: ADAM BARNES

left: Eleven trails (40 miles' worth) give Shaker Village guests opportunities to see the countryside. **above:** Artisans such as broom-makers, weavers, furniture-makers, and sheep shearers demonstrate their skills; then they sell their wares in the two gift shops.

Welcome to the Village

With wildflower trails, wonderful food, and breathtaking scenery, this peaceful spot in the Bluegrass State invites visitors to explore and enjoy.

The first time I saw Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, I fell in love with its simple yet stunning beauty. Just 25 miles from Lexington, Kentucky, this 2,900-acre living-history preserve exudes an otherworldly serenity. Rolling hills, stacked-stone fences, and 34 buildings crafted in the 1800s speak quietly and eloquently of another way of life. Built by a religious order that lasted here until the early 1900s, the picture-postcard spot calls me back again and again.

Walking the Trails

Forty miles of trails await visitors to Shaker Village. You'll marvel at the wildflowers that dot the landscape, from trillium to fire pink to bloodroot.

Several of the trails were created for mountain bikers and horseback riders, but walking gives you the best opportunity to view some of the wildlife. You may see squirrels, chipmunks, raccoons, rabbits, white-tailed deer, and groundhogs scurrying about.

Songbirds and wild turkeys provide a little woods music while you wander.

Aside from a self-guided trek (ask for a map) along Shaker Village's trails, you can also take a three-hour guided nature walk for \$5.

Dining Delights

Whatever you do, don't miss savoring a meal in the Trustees' Office dining room. Make a reservation (they're open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily). The cornsticks come out first, hot, crispy, and impossible to resist. The coleslaw—with its boiled dressing—is another must-try, a perfect segue into a vegetable plate. Sample the fried okra, potatoes, and signature tomato-celery soup. Don't pass up the lemon pie, a tangy confection that will leave you prayerful.

Staying Put

You can spend a night in one of the original Shaker buildings. But don't worry, you won't be without modern

amenities, such as TV and a private bath. By spending the night, you'll have time to explore the two gift shops filled with handmade furniture, oval boxes (\$30), and brooms (\$16.95).

Take a last walk through the village itself, and enjoy watching the sheep-shearing demonstrations, as well as the woodworkers and the basket-makers. Listen to the a cappella music sung in the Meeting House, and be thankful for the legacy of the gentle Shakers.

WANDA MCKINNEY

Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill: 3501 Lexington Road, Harrodsburg, KY 40330; 1-800-734-5611 or www.shakervillageky.org. **Admission:** \$12.50 adults, \$7 ages 12-17, \$5 ages 7-11, and free for ages 6 and under. **Hours:** 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. **Accommodations:** Room rates begin at \$78. **Dining:** Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner; call for hours and reservations. **Directions:** From Lexington, take U.S. 68 for 25 miles to Shaker Village. ♦