

# The Kentucky Derby Museum

Churchill Downs, Louisville, Kentucky

**Role:** Architect for New Museum

**Building Area:** 45,000 sf

**Description:** In 1982, our firm was selected through a national competition to design a new building for the Kentucky Derby Museum. Located at world-renowned Churchill Downs, the new building has been sited to create an entry courtyard that will impart a sense of arrival that is appropriate to this famous institution. This entry court is flanked on the east by the museum building, on the west by the historic Club House and on the south by the entry portico to Churchill Downs. In order to unify the architectural expression of these two buildings, the front façade of the new Museum is designed as a mirror image of the front of the Club House, with the entry doors of both buildings on an axis with each other. The Museum's twin spires and sloping roof echo the architecture of the race track structure, which further unifies the Churchill Downs complex.

Inside the 45,000 sf three-level building, there are approximately 18,000 sf of public areas, including 12,500 sf of long term and temporary exhibition galleries on two levels, a gift shop, dining facilities, and an auditorium. Outdoor areas south of the museum building will be used for live demonstrations of tracking and saddling, outdoor dining, and additional exhibits.

The primary goal of the exhibition program is to tell visitors about horse racing in general and the Kentucky Derby in particular so that they will find their experience at Churchill Downs more interesting and enjoyable. The exhibits are intended to increase their understanding of thoroughbred racing, the breeding, care, and training of thoroughbreds wagering and handicapping, and the training and attributes that produce great jockeys. Three of the galleries will focus on aspects of the Kentucky Derby, including winning horses, jockeys, trainers, breeders, and stud farms. The highlight of the exhibition sequence will be the race gallery, a two-story rotunda surrounded by a 360 degree projection screen in the shape of a race track oval. An audio-visual presentation, which can be viewed from both exhibition levels, will convey the experience of a day of racing at Churchill Downs.





