



BILOXI



Contact: Sandy Bynum, Tourism Division 601.359.3297
sbynum@mississippi.org

THE MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST IS THIS WEEK'S FEATURED LOCATION FOR THE VH1 TOP 20 VIDEO COUNTDOWN

Jackson, Mississippi (September 1, 2010) – The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) Tourism Division announced today that the “VH1 Top 20 Video Countdown” will feature more than 12 locations along the Mississippi Gulf Coast when it airs Saturday, September 4 at 8 a.m.

The top-rated television program, along with 149 nationally aired TV spots on VH1, is part of the Mississippi Gulf Coast “Wish You Were Here” multi-platform tourism campaign funded by BP. The campaign has been running since June 29 under the advisement of the Gulf Coast Tourism Steering Committee and the Mississippi Development Authority. The VH1 program also airs Sunday, September 5 from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m., and again during the following week.

The “Wish You Were Here” campaign is running in 15 regional markets including Atlanta, Tampa-St. Pete and Baton Rouge with a media budget of nearly \$10 million. The “VH1 Top 20 Video Countdown” will extend the Mississippi Gulf Coast’s promotional efforts to a national level. The show has previously featured premier destinations such as Las Vegas, Costa Rica and the Grand Cayman Islands.

“We are thrilled the ‘VH1 Top 20 Video Countdown’ show is featuring our beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast,” said Mary Beth Wilkerson, director of tourism for the Mississippi Development Authority. “A two-hour national show continuously promoting the Mississippi Gulf Coast is a very nice component of the campaign offering us expanded reach in promoting the Coast tourism product.”

Footage will feature the show’s host, Jim Shearer, visiting Mississippi Gulf Coast attractions, landmarks and experiencing Southern hospitality and culture. Shearer also was able to interview singing sensation Rob Thomas before an appearance in Mississippi.

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The “VH1 Top 20 Video Countdown” production crew taped features at numerous locations along the Mississippi Gulf Coast as part of the shows content:

Beau Rivage Resort & Casino, Biloxi
Bay St. Louis Bridge
Pier at St. Stanislaus College, Bay St. Louis
Institute for Marine Mammal Studies, Gulfport
Half Shell Oyster House, Downtown Gulfport
The Quarter Bar, Downtown Gulfport
Mississippi Coast Coliseum & Convention Center, Biloxi
IP Casino Resort & Spa, Biloxi
Hard Rock Hotel & Casino, Biloxi
Biloxi Small Craft Harbor
Biloxi Lighthouse
Mary C. O’Keefe Cultural Center, Ocean Springs
Walter Anderson Museum of Art, Ocean Springs
The Shed Barbeque & Blues Joint, Ocean Springs

More details about the “VH1 Top 20 Video Countdown” featuring the Mississippi Gulf Coast and the “Wish You Were Here” campaign along with other promotional information can be found at www.visitmscoast.org. The website also includes Destination Video Reports, produced three times a week, that highlight great events and attractions all along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. These videos can also be found on the YouTube and Facebook pages. Bi-weekly giveaways highlighting festivals and events along the Mississippi Gulf Coast are a featured component of the campaign. Visit the website daily for a chance to win great getaways.

For more information about the entire State of Mississippi’s tourism product go to www.VisitMississippi.org.

About Mississippi Development Authority Mississippi Development Authority is the State of Mississippi’s lead economic and community development agency. Nearly 300 employees are engaged in providing services to businesses, communities and workers in the state. While the agency is best known for its efforts to recruit new businesses to Mississippi, the Authority provides services to promote tourism, help communities improve their quality of place, help existing employers identify and meet opportunities and challenges and help workers improve their skills – all with the goal of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of Mississippians. For more information, visit MDA’s website at www.mississippi.org.