

April 4, 2013 – Alaska Journal of Commerce - [Sitka considered a must-see](#)

By Elwood Brehmer

Sitka considered a must-see

Sitka is a little town with a big draw, at least according to Smithsonian magazine. The art, history and popular culture magazine ranked the community ninth in the “Top 20 Best Small Towns to Visit in 2013” feature article in its April issue.

To qualify for the list a community must have a population of less than 15,000 and ample cultural significance — a concentrations of museums, art galleries, theaters and historic sites, according to Smithsonian.

Gettysburg, Md., was awarded the list’s top spot.

Smithsonian contributor Susan Spano wrote, “No other town in the 49th state has Sitka’s charisma. To wander through its historic downtown is to appreciate how three cultures—Tlingit, Russian and American—were woven together. Built partly on bay-front pilings, the landmark Alaska Native Brotherhood Hall houses the first chapter of an organization founded in 1912 to fight discrimination against the state’s first people.”

Spano added that Sitka’s idyllic location on Baranof Island in Southeast Alaska helped the town to be chosen.

American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association, or AIANTA, Executive Director Camille Ferguson is also a member of the Sitka Tribe of Alaska.

“AIANTA is incredibly proud of our member Sitka Tribe of Alaska and this accomplishment. Hard work and a desire to preserve Indian Country has put Sitka on the map,” Ferguson stated in an association release.

The full list and accompanying stories can be viewed on the Smithsonian website at www.smithsonianmag.com.