

Tim McGraw for the Louisiana
Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism.

Official Louisiana Tour Guide

LOUISIANA
OFFICE OF THE LT. GOVERNOR
Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism

1-800-99-GUMBO
LouisianaTravel.com

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WELCOME TO LOUISIANA

Our state has always been known as a wonderful place to visit, and in the past two years Louisiana has made significant progress in our recovery. In fact, the locals will tell you we are back in business. We possess a rich, unique and authentic culture that's so popular, many places have tried to copy it. We are home to Jazz, Cajun Zydeco and Rockabilly. Okra gumbo, meat pies and boudin. Creole cottages, wrought iron balconies and majestic plantations. The Atchafalaya, cypress swamps and of course the Mississippi River. Our vibrant arts community, museums showcasing local and national history and state parks that highlight our natural beauty offer experiences for every taste. We want to invite you to come enjoy the things we do every day. There is nothing we love more than having company. Come for a visit and let us show you what hospitality is all about.

Make our Louisiana your Louisiana.
We look forward to seeing you soon.

Mitch Landrieu
Lieutenant Governor

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2008 Official Louisiana Tour Guide

Bobby Jindal, Governor
Mitch Landrieu, Lieutenant Governor

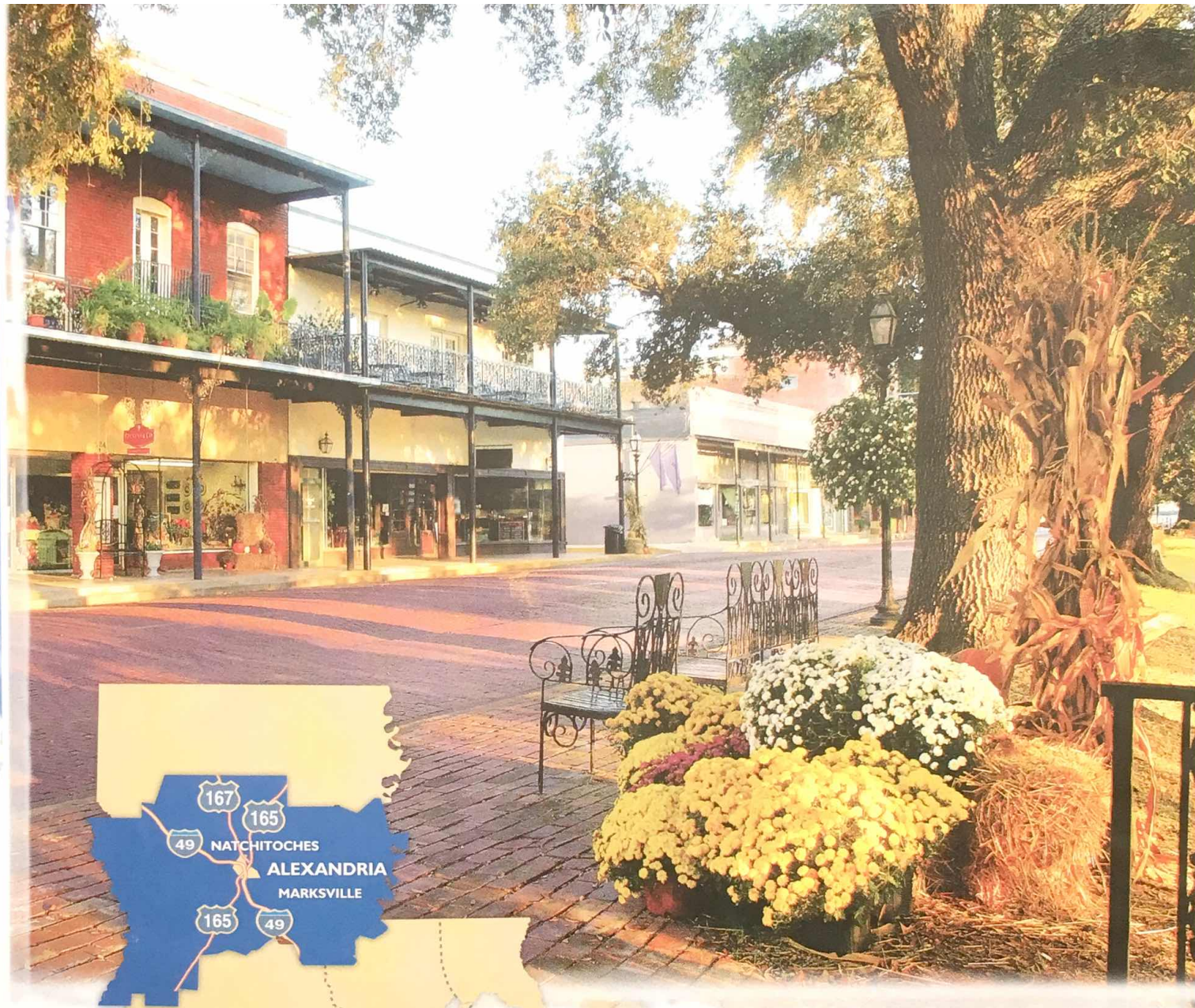
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Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
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CROSSROADS

For more information on Crossroads, see pages 64, 66 and 69.

Louisiana's Crossroads region is, quite naturally, a meeting place of cultures. You'll find a nicely spiced melting pot of French, Spanish and English influences in cities such as Alexandria, Marksville, Natchitoches, DeRidder, Leesville and Pineville.

Louisiana's Crossroads region is where the Deep South tones of North Louisiana meet the colonial influences of the state's southern regions. At its heart is Alexandria, from which both speedy highways and meandering back roads

navigate through the land, past plains where Native Americans once ruled, through forests of majestic pines.

A quintessentially Southern beauty is found in the countryside here, the reason why this region is often chosen as the setting for movies (*Steel*

Magnolias and *All the King's Men* were filmed here, among others). Venture far enough off the beaten path and you'll find wandering waterways and rustic farmhouses, where living off the land is still very much a way of life. A short drive from Alexandria, visitors



Left: Historic Front Street in Natchitoches. Above: Alexandria Zoo.

can tour Frogmore Plantation with its computerized cotton gin and onsite tours of the “old days” – a testament to the possibility of new technology and tradition blending harmoniously.

The region’s rich history and small-town friendliness are constant back-

the Adai Indian Cultural Center near Robeline is worth a stop.

Colonial influences made their mark on the land. In Robeline, Los Adaes State Historic Site, site of a Spanish presidio and mission, was the capital of the province of Spanish Texas for

Off the beaten path, living off the land is still very much a way of life.

drops for the visitor experience here, as is the region’s diversity of cultures. Native Americans, descendants of the area’s original settlers, share their culture and traditions with travelers. Marksville, located in Avoyelles Parish, is home to one of the earliest Native American civilizations in the U.S. Today, visitors to the Marksville State Historic Site, located on a bluff overlooking the Old River, can tour the prehistoric ceremonial and burial mounds and visit the Native American Museum. With its roaming buffalo,

44 years. In Natchitoches, the oldest permanent settlement in the Louisiana Purchase Territory, visitors find architecture similar to New Orleans’ French Quarter.

Visitors will want to explore the Cane River National Heritage Area, which begins just south of Natchitoches and runs for 35 miles along Cane River Lake. Many historic sites, including Creole-style plantation homes, are open to the public here.

After the Louisiana Purchase, Toledo Bend, an outdoor paradise,

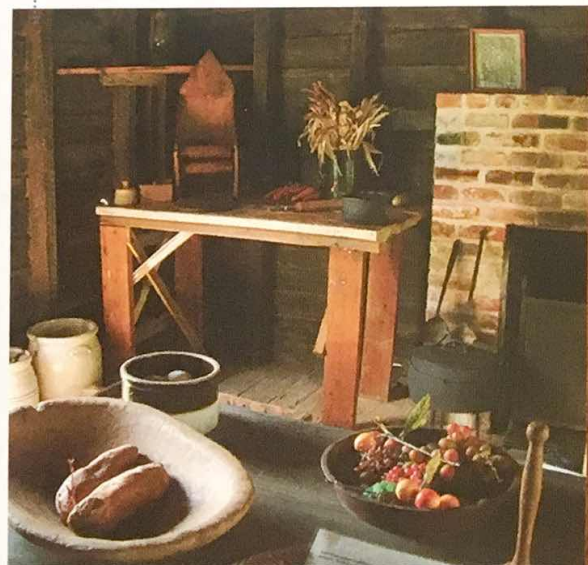
was once disputed property between Spain and the U.S. In the absence of a clearly defined government, bandits and outlaws ruled this “no man’s land.”

Turbulent times have come to this region more than once. During the Civil War, Union troops burned the city of Alexandria; from the ashes of the conflict came the Victorian architectural style that is prevalent today. Many years and several wars later, Generals Patton, Marshall and Eisenhower mapped out war strategies here during the Louisiana Maneuvers, just before the U.S. entered WWII.

For a reminder of more tranquil times, you’ll want to visit Hodges Gardens State Park in nearby Florien. The gardens were the inspiration of oil and gas businessman A.J. Hodges, Sr., who took an abandoned quarry and planted a paradise.

Stay a while, meet the people, and explore the Crossroad region’s tranquil countryside and friendly small towns. 🌿

Plantation kitchen, Frogmore Plantation. photo by Sher Hogue





MUSIC & CULTURE

Fans of famous musicians Jerry Lee Lewis, Mickey Gilley and the late Pee-Wee Whitaker will want to stop in at Ferriday, an eight-square-mile town just west of the Mississippi state line, where the Delta Music Museum showcases Louisiana's musical heritage.

The Louisiana Country Music Hall of Fame in Marthaville is a testament to the Anglo-Scots-Irish settlers who came to the area. Their folk music and instruments are the roots of what country music is today. The museum is located at Rebel State Park, west of Natchitoches.

Each August, in Natchitoches Parish, the Cane River Zydeco Festival gets visitors' toes tappin' and feet stompin'. The festival offers a unique style of music that is indigenous to Louisiana, and features accordions and washboards known as rubboards or *frottoirs*. Throughout the year, live entertainment is found on the riverbank in downtown Natchitoches.



Adai Chief Dance at Cane River Zydeco Festival.



HISTORY & HERITAGE

In the Alexandria/Pineville area, visit the Mt. Olivet Episcopal Church, which housed Union troops during the Civil War, saving it from the fate of other downtown buildings that were burned to the ground. Many notable people from Louisiana's history are buried here.

Melrose Plantation, located 16 miles south of Natchitoches, tells the remarkable story of a slave woman who gained her freedom and helped her family become one of the wealthiest families of color in the nation at the turn of the 19th century. This is also the site where nationally recognized artist Clementine Hunter worked as a field hand and cook while recording Cane River life through primitive art. Other plantations in the region include Kent Plantation House, a former cotton plantation

that is Central Louisiana's oldest standing structure, and Tyrone Plantation, the big house of a 1,200-acre cotton plantation that was built in 1843, now a B&B.

Upriver, Winnfield was made famous by the colorful politics of the Long brothers. The Louisiana Political Museum and Hall of Fame in Winnfield showcases memorabilia from the 1920s and '30s that calls to mind Huey Long's campaign themed "Every Man a King."



Kent Plantation House.



NATURE & OUTDOORS

Campers and hikers will enjoy Kisatchie National Forest, where the Wild Azalea National Recreation Trail can be found. Nearby Kincaid Lake provides a relaxing spot for a picnic and a swim. Another place of note is Indian Creek Lake and Recreation area, with its 2,250-acre lake, recreation facilities and primitive campsites, all located in Alexander State Forest. Toledo Bend, a popular fishing area, is also great for hunting, birding, canoeing and hiking. Golf courses abound in the region, notably including Tamahka Trails in



OakWing Golf Course, Alexandria.

Marksville, Emerald Hills in Florien, OakWing in Alexandria and Cypress Bend, near Toledo Bend.

Big Bend, southeast of Marksville, is where the Sarto Old Iron Bridge can be found. This steel-truss swinging bridge, open to foot traffic only, was built over Bayou des Glaises in 1913.



FOOD

When visiting the region, rib-stickin' home cookin' is what you'll find, whether that's fluffy, buttery biscuits or an alligator jambalaya. The food the area is most famous for, however, is pie. These pies consist of a pastry crust, folded in half, stuffed with spicy meat and pine nuts, baked until flaky and brown. Mmmm! Don't miss the Meat Pie Festival in September when this delicious concoction is celebrated. The festival is held in Natchitoches, the place Oprah Winfrey declared "Best Little Town in the Whole USA!"

Lecompte is home to Lea's Lunchroom, a great little restaurant that's been serving since 1928. Just a hop, skip, and jump off of I-49, Lecompte is a perfect pit stop on any road trip. Baked ham sandwiches started out as their specialty, but their melt-in-your-mouth pie with its tall, fluffy meringue is a feast for the taste buds.

Meat pies, Natchitoches.





BACK ROADS & SMALL TOWNS

Timber is important to Louisiana's heartland, and the town of Zwolle hosts festivals each year to celebrate the industry. One of these is the Zwolle Loggers and Forestry Festival in May, which honors the state's oldest living logger.

Main Street in Cloutierville is home to many historic structures, including the Kate Chopin House, a Creole-style home that celebrates the author of *The Awakening*. Though unappreciated in her own time, Chopin is regarded today as one of the great American writers of the 19th century.

Natchitoches is home to more than 40 bed and breakfast inns, many located within walking distance of historic district shops, restaurants and attractions. 🏡

FESTIVALS

MARCH: Merryville Living History Festival 337-463-5534

MARCH: Que'in on the Red
Alexandria, 800-738-5534,
www.queinonthered.com

MAY: Tunica-Biloxi Pow Wow
Marksville, 800-946-1946 ext. 6318

MAY: Cochon de Lait Festival
Mansura, 318-964-2887,
www.cochondelait.com/festival

JULY: Beauregard Parish Watermelon Festival DeRidder, 800-738-5534,
www.beauparish.org/tourism

SEPTEMBER: Cane River Zydeco Festival Natchitoches, 318-471-9960,

SEPTEMBER: Meat Pie Festival
Natchitoches, 800-259-1714,
www.meatpiefestival.com

OCTOBER: Tamale Fiesta
Zwolle, 318-645-6141,
www.zwollela.net/tamale.asp

OCTOBER: Lecompte Pie Festival
Lecompte, www.asliceoflouisiana.com

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER: Natchitoches Christmas Festival
Natchitoches, 800-259-1714,
www.christmasfestival.com

For more events, see pgs. 67 and 68 or visit www.LouisianaTravel.com.

AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE TRAIL



African House at Melrose Plantation.

CANE RIVER CREOLES

The Cane River Creoles, the descendants of French settlers and enslaved African Americans who intermingled on the isolated frontier of Northwest Louisiana, have an intriguing history. Their most famous union was that of French planter Claude Thomas Pierre Metoyer and his common-law wife, Marie Therese Coincoin. She bore him 10 children and, once set free, began to purchase their freedom as well.

Like other Creole populations in Louisiana, the Cane River Creoles were French speakers, Catholic and relatively well off. In addition to eventually owning thousands of acres of plantation land in the area south of Natchitoches, many even owned slaves themselves before the Civil War ended that practice.

Today, the Creole community maintains many of its vibrant traditions. The spiritual heart of this culture is the 200-year-old St. Augustine Church, built by one of Marie Therese's sons. The church is open to the public, as is Melrose Plantation, the family seat of the Metoyer family. Later, Melrose was home to Clementine Hunter, a folk artist who documented the African American world of Cane River in remarkable paintings.

ARNA BONTEMPS

In downtown Alexandria, the Arna Bontemps House and Museum tells the story of one of Louisiana's most gifted native sons. A prolific novelist, poet, playwright, essayist and historian, Bontemps was a prominent figure in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s. Although his family left Louisiana when he was a child, Bontemps nonetheless drew heavily on his experiences in Louisiana, and those of his family, in his lifelong struggles against racial injustice.

Before traveling the African American Heritage Trail on foot, travel it online at LouisianaTravel.com/AfricanAmericanHeritageTrail.

A HELPING HAND FROM THE LOCALS

Alexandria-Pineville Area CVB,
www.louisianafromhere.com

Avoyelles Parish Tourist Commission,
www.travelavoyelles.com

Beauregard Parish Tourist Commission,
www.beauparish.org

Natchitoches Area Convention & Visitors Bureau,
www.natchitoches.net

Sabine Parish Tour & Recreation Commission, www.sabineparish.com

Vernon Parish Tourism Commission,
337-238-0783



Paragon Casino Resort, Marksville.



TOLEDO BEND LAKE COUNTRY AREA
 REMAINDER OF CROSSROADS REGION

TOLEDO BEND LAKE COUNTRY AREA

Visitor Information Centers

Atakapa-Coushatta Trace Visitors Center

www.beauparish.org
 703 N. Bryan St., Merryville, 70653
 337-825-5380, 866-925-5380
 Bird and larger game hunting. Birders can find half of the birds of North America in Southwest Louisiana. River and lake fishing.

Beauregard Parish Tourist Commission

www.beauparish.org
 104 W. Port St., DeRidder, 70634
 337-463-5534, 800-738-5534
 Unique for its people and attractions, home to a doll museum, gothic jail and six museums reflecting each parish area's heritage.

Sabine Parish Tourist & Recreation Commission

www.sabineparish.com
 1601 Texas Hwy., Many, 71449
 318-256-5880, 800-358-7802
 An exciting time for the entire family with fishing, hunting, golf, gardens, historic sites, antiques, crafts, festivals and more. Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. **Ad Page 65**

Sabine River Authority

www.toledo-bend.com/srala
 15091 Texas Hwy., Many, 71449
 318-256-4112, 800-259-5253
 Providing facilities for the fisherman or boater looking for a launch site, as well as those wishing to camp overnight or spend the pleasant winter months here.

Toledo Bend Reservoir and Tourist Center

www.toledo-bend.com/srala
 15091 Texas Hwy., Many, 71449
 318-256-4114, 800-259-5253
 No. 1 in freshwater recreation, fishing, boating, swimming, camping and golfing.

Vernon Parish Tourism Commission

www.visitvernon.org
 201 S. Third St., Leesville, 71446
 337-238-0783, 800-349-6287
 The wildflower capital of Louisiana. Anacoco and Vernon lakes, Kisatchie National Forest, Leesville National Register Historic District, camping and fishing.

Golf

Cypress Bend Golf Resort & Conference Center

www.cypressbend.com
 2000 Cypress Bend Pkwy., Many, 71449
 318-590-1500, 877-519-1500
 "Louisiana's destination resort." Make your reservations today.

Emerald Hills Golf Resort

www.emeraldhillsresort.com
 42618 Hwy. 171 S., Florien, 71429
 318-586-4661, 800-533-5031
 An 18-hole championship golf course, pro shop, practice range and a full-service restaurant and motel on premises.

Historic Sites

Fort Jesup State Historic Site

www.lastateparks.com
 32 Geoghagan Rd., Many, 71449
 318-256-4117, 888-677-5378
 Fort's site was established by Zachary Taylor in 1822. Museum, outdoor exhibits, guided tours, picnicking and special events.

Merryville Historical Society Museum

www.beau.lib.la.us/~screen
 628 N. Railroad St., Merryville, 70653
 337-825-0101
 An 1883 log cabin and museum. Merryville Heritage Festival, live music, street dances and heritage demos.



Pleasant Hill Battle Reenactment. photo courtesy of Sabine Parish Tour & Recreation Commission

Parks & Nature

Hodges Gardens

www.lastateparks.com
 1000 Hodges Loop, Florien, 71429
 318-586-3523, 800-354-3523
 Forty acres of gardens, a 225-acre bass fishing lake, miles of hiking and biking trails, and RV and wilderness camping.

North Toledo Bend State Park

www.lastateparks.com
 2907 N. Toledo Park Rd., Zwolle, 71488
 318-645-4715, 888-677-6400
 Excellent fishing and boating, camping, cabins, group camping, swimming pool, picnicking, playground, trails, boat launch and a meeting room.

South Toledo Bend State Park

www.lastateparks.com
 120 Bald Eagle Rd., Anacoco, 71403
 337-286-9075, 888-398-4770
 On the southern end of Toledo Bend Reservoir. Well-known to water sports enthusiasts. Visitors can enjoy nature programs in the scenically situated visitor center.

KEY TO SYMBOLS:

- Handicapped Accessible;
- Civil War Site; Child-Friendly
- Certified Statewide Info Center



PLANTATION COUNTRY



The romance and history of the Mississippi River embodies the visitor experience in Plantation Country, where destinations such as Baton Rouge, St. Francisville, Port Allen, Donaldsonville, Vacherie, New Roads and Burnside welcome travelers.

For more information on Plantation Country, see pages 112 and 123.

Throughout the centuries, ghost stories and larger-than-life legends have been passed down in Plantation Country, the most genteel of Louisiana places. The region's homes, a hodge-podge of Creole/West Indies and English

antebellum styles, have colorful stories to tell of the families who once inhabited them.

Follow the Mississippi as it flows down through the heart of Plantation Country and discover avenues of ancient oak trees that grace the lawns

of stately homes and mansions, all whispering of days gone by. Take a quiet walk at Rosedown Plantation in St. Francisville, where the gardens were uncovered and restored to provide a haven of serenity amidst the scent of roses.



Left: Oak Alley Plantation. photo courtesy of Baton Rouge CVB
Above: Louisiana State University Tiger Stadium. photo by Jim Zietz

Baton Rouge, Louisiana's capital, is experiencing a rebirth of its own, from the renaissance of its downtown, to its culinary scene, to its identity as the movie capital of the South.

Outdoorsmen will find the region to be a fisherman's haven, with the rustic camps of Old River and False River. Time passes imperceptibly,

wildlife abound in the appropriately named Alligator Bayou. For animal viewing in a setting that's a little less wild, the Baton Rouge Zoo is an inexpensive way to spend an afternoon with children. Nearby Blue Bayou Waterpark and Dixie Landin' Amusement Park offer rides such as Voodoo, the "world's largest dark

*Avenues of ancient oak trees
grace the lawns of mansions here.*

until the crank of an airboat penetrates the calm. Golfers can follow the Audubon Golf Trail to notable courses, or visit Zachary, home of Copper Mill Golf Course, named one of *Golf Digest's* Top New Courses (2004). Race fans can fill their need for speed at the Baton Rouge Raceway on Friday nights, when the roar of engines can be heard miles away.

Plantation Country offers much to families as well. Not surprisingly, alligators and other swamp-loving

behemothbowl waterslide," and the Ragin' Cajun, a 14-story looping steel roller coaster.

History comes to life throughout the year in Plantation Country. Port Hudson National Historic Site holds an annual reenactment of the Battle of Port Hudson. In nearby Jackson, visitors can ride an old rail train, observe a reenactment of the Battle of Jackson Crossroads, or stop in at Centenary Commemorative Area.

The tasteful manners and hospitality

of Plantation Country are known the world over. During pre-Civil War times, unmarried males (both guests and family members) were often housed away from the main building (and the unmarried ladies) in a *garçonnière*, a small building on the plantation grounds. If you overstayed your welcome while visiting a friend on one of the plantations, a pineapple would be placed on your bed as a gentle reminder that it was time to leave. Ironically, today the pineapple is a symbol of welcome.

December is a magical time in Plantation Country. During the first weekend of the month, St. Francisville entertains with "Christmas in the Country," where residents and visitors alike can step back in time and walk through a lighted historic district, complete with strolling carolers. In mid-December, Lutcher's Festival of the Bonfires on the Mississippi River lights the way for *Papa Noël*. 🍷

Dixie Landin' Amusement Park, Baton Rouge.





MUSIC & CULTURE

The music of Plantation Country is as diverse as its people. Teddy's Juke Joint in Zachary serves up blues and soul food in an unassuming haunt frequented by locals. The Baton Rouge blues scene is still alive here today thanks to the efforts of Tabby Thomas, the late Johnny Adams and many others.

Cajun zydeco and swamp pop can be heard at many gatherings and festivals throughout Plantation Country. French, German, Hungarian and English influences are all evident in the styles of the swamp waltz and zydeco two-step.

Football season brings fans of the sport as well as contemporary music to the area, as live bands play during tailgating parties at Louisiana State University and Southern University and at the popular Live After 5 series in downtown Baton Rouge.

Southern charm abounds in Donaldsonville, a 200-year-old river town known for its multicultural museums, quaint B&Bs, interesting architecture and unique shops. A treasure of regional culinary experiences awaits you here.



Teddy's Juke Joint, Zachary.
photo by Brian Baiamonte



The Bluffs, St. Francisville.

South of Baton Rouge, visitors will want to visit the Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center. Alligator Bayou in Ascension Parish provides educational entertainment that kids will enjoy. In Pointe Coupée Parish, the Old River and False River areas provide opportunities for fishing, boating and jet skiing.



FOOD

There's a saying in Louisiana: "We don't eat to live, we live to eat." Nowhere is this more true than in Plantation Country. Downtown Baton Rouge has experienced a renaissance in its culinary scene, from rooftop sushi at Tsunami's to the recently opened D'Agostinos.

Houmas House Plantation in Darrow features its own style of nouveau Creole cuisine at Latil's Landing and Café Burnside, where the innovative offerings include starters such as bisque of curried pumpkin, crawfish and corn. Upriver at The Myrtles Plantation, Varnedoe's in the Carriage House serves up contemporary Southern cuisine. Their fried green tomatoes are topped with shrimp and lump crabmeat in a remoulade sauce.

A taste of old Acadian style can be found in a back-country snack called *gratons* (cracklins) or a hot link of boudin. The Gonzales Jambalaya Festival will give you the best of the best in this traditional Louisiana dish.



HISTORY & HERITAGE

In the 1700s and early 1800s, the Great River Road delivered French Creoles from New Orleans, hardworking German settlers, and planters from England trying to make their fortunes. They brought with them diverse customs that made Louisiana the interesting *mélange* of styles that it is today. The Feliciana Parishes are full of charming antebellum homes and bed & breakfast inns. Livingston Parish celebrates its Hungarian ties in a celebration each year, while nearby Gonzales honors its German heritage with Oktoberfest.

Pointe Coupée Parish (meaning "cut off point") is the oldest settlement in Plantation Country. The area was first explored by Iberville and Bienville in 1699 and later became one of the original parishes after the Louisiana Purchase.

Reenactors re-create the antebellum era at Houmas House.



NATURE & OUTDOORS

John James Audubon created many of his wildlife sketches while he was a tutor at Oakley Plantation at Audubon State Historic Site in St. Francisville. To many in the nation, Audubon's sketches first brought an understanding of the need to conserve nature. The Tunica Trace, in the same area, offers hiking and wildlife watching.

Audubon also left his mark on the golf scene, where the Audubon Golf Trail includes 13 courses that are dedicated to protecting the environment and preserving the natural heritage of the game of golf. The Bluffs, an Arnold Palmer course developed before the Audubon Trail came along, is nestled among the lush landscape of Plantation Country. The park-style course blooms with azaleas, on land that Audubon himself may have walked.



BACK ROADS & SMALL TOWNS

Cities such as Baton Rouge and Gonzales offer so much to Plantation Country, but it is the back roads and small towns that weave their way into the hearts of visitors. You may even see these places at the movie theater.

Take a drive up to Clinton, where the Duke boys found their way onto the big

AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE TRAIL

screen. Relive *Easy Rider* with a visit to Morganza, where part of this classic movie was filmed.

Angola is home to the "World's Most Famous Rodeo," where each Sunday in October the Louisiana State Penitentiary opens its doors to the general public. The prison has also been the filming location for movies such as *Monster's Ball*.

Visitors seeking quieter times and old finds will be charmed by the antiques stores found in the downtown areas of Plaquemine and Denham Springs. The region's rural small towns are farmed for cotton, sugar cane, corn, soybeans and pecans, making a drive through the countryside an education in Louisiana's farming roots. 🍌

FESTIVALS

MARCH: Audubon Pilgrimage

St. Francisville, 225-635-6330,
www.audubonpilgrimage.info

APRIL: Wine & Culinary Festival

Baton Rouge, 800-239-9880,
www.coastalwinetour.com

MAY: Baton Rouge Fest for All

Baton Rouge, 225-344-8558,
www.artsbr.org

MAY: Gonzales Jambalaya Festival

Gonzales, www.jambalayafestival.org

AUGUST: Baton Rouge Balloon

Festival Baton Rouge, 800-LA-ROUGE,
www.laballooning.com

OCTOBER: French Settlement Creole Festival

www.visitlivingstonparish.com

OCTOBER: Donaldsonville

Sunshine Festival Donaldsonville,
225-473-4814,
www.donaldsonvillecoc.org

OCTOBER: SugarFest West Baton

Rouge, www.westbatonrouge.net/festivalevents.php

OCTOBER: Boucherie Festival Sorrento

www.eatel.net/~fred/boucherie

DECEMBER: Christmas in the Country

St. Francisville, 800-789-4221,
www.stfrancisville.net

DECEMBER: Festival of

the Bonfires On the levee between Latcher and Gramercy,
www.stjamesla.com, festivalofthebonfires.org



Laura Plantation, Vacherie.

THE PLANTATION WORLD OF SOUTH LOUISIANA

In Donaldsonville, the River Road African American Museum offers a very good interpretation of African American life in a commercial center along the river. Situated among vast sugar plantations, Donaldsonville attracted middle-class African American professionals – doctors, merchants and educators – who maintained a vibrant community life in the years after the Civil War. Their stories are told in vivid detail.

Laura Plantation, in Vacherie, focuses on the concept of Creole culture in interpreting

the lives of the white and black families who lived there in the 19th century. Of particular interest is the story of Alcee Fortier, the Louisiana folklorist, who recorded stories about *Compair lapin* (Br'er Rabbit) while visiting in the 1870s. These are the same stories as ones still told in West Africa today.

THE CHARGE OF THE NATIVE GUARDS

Site of the first major use of African American troops in combat during the Civil War, Port Hudson is located about 20 miles above Baton Rouge. The Troops, raised from the free people of color and ex-slaves in the New Orleans area, made several gallant but ill-fated charges against the Confederate defenses here.

Before traveling the African American Heritage Trail on foot, travel it online at LouisianaTravel.com/AfricanAmericanHeritageTrail.

A HELPING HAND FROM THE LOCALS

Ascension Parish Tourist Commission,
www.ascensiontourism.com

Baton Rouge Area CVB,
www.visitbatonrouge.com

Donaldsonville Tourist Commission
www.tourdonaldsonville.org

East Feliciana Parish Tourist Commission,
www.felicianatourism.org

Iberville Parish Tourist Commission,
www.ibervilleparish.com

Livingston Parish CVB,
www.visitlivingstonparish.com

Pointe Coupée Office of Tourism,
www.pctourism.org

River Parishes Tourist Commission,
www.takemetotheriver.com

St. Charles Parish Economic Development & Tourism Department,
www.stcharlesgov.net

St. Helena Parish Tourist Commission,
225-222-4632

St. James Parish Welcome Center,
www.stjamesla.com

St. John Parish Economic Development Department,
www.stjohnla.us

West Baton Rouge Conference Center,
www.westbatonrouge.net

West Feliciana Parish Tourist Commission,
www.stfrancisville.us

For more events, see pg. 120
or visit www.LouisianaTravel.com.

