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**NEW ORLEANS & COMPANY**

## **New Orleans**

In this little corner of the American South, New Orleans celebrates almost anything. The Crescent City's diverse culture of French, Spanish, African and Caribbean influences blend together in a harmonious gumbo that's main ingredients are a love of people, food, and music. It can be seen radiating onto the nearly 300-year-old streets of the French Quarter and surrounding areas. There is something to amuse and delight everyone who visits New Orleans.

With world-class restaurants, award-winning chefs cook up savory creations to appease any palate. There are more than 1,400 restaurants open city-wide, so even the pickiest eater is bound to find something delicious. From five-star elegant dining rooms to quaint open-air cafés, when it comes to the ultimate restaurant experience, New Orleans can't be beat. Visitors can become a sous chef by stepping into the kitchen at one of the many creole cooking schools and bringing home famous recipes for jambalaya, gumbo and bread pudding as a souvenir.

The city's roots in jazz music provide a backbone for great nightlife and major festivals, events are a weekly occurrence in New Orleans. The "Birthplace of Jazz" incorporates music into almost all of the 120+ festivals the city hosts yearly. The majority of the festivals include live music, food by some of the best restaurants in the city, and warm weather making it the perfect excuse to grab a blanket and some friends and head to the festival grounds. The two biggest festivals, French Quarter Festival and the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, bring hundreds of thousands of people to see local bands as well as national headliners.

Live music can be found every day of the year. Preservation Hall performs traditional jazz shows that are open to all ages. In the Faubourg Marigny, the music clubs on Frenchmen Street are full of locals and tourists listening to genres ranging from jazz to brass or from funk to reggae. National acts come to town and play at the Smoothie King Center, Sanger Theater or more intimate venues like Tipitina's, House of Blues or the Joy Theatre.

The newly opened Outlet Collection at Riverwalk is the nation's first outlet mall within an urban setting, boasting more than 75 stores. Within walking distance of the Riverwalk are the Shops at Canal Place, featuring luxury stores including Saks Fifth Avenue and Tiffany's & Co. The six mile strip of Magazine Street offers some wonderful independently-owned clothing and home-goods boutiques. Only one block from the energetic Bourbon Street is Royal Street, lined with antique shops holding treasures for other ages.

New Orleans is proud to tout its reputation as a family-fun destination. Museums such as the National WWII Museum, the Audubon Butterfly Garden and Insectarium, and Blaine Kern's Mardi Gras World provide children with the opportunity to have fun and give parents the satisfaction of knowing their child is learning. Blaine Kern's Mardi Gras World, where Mardi Gras is made, displays the art of Mardi Gras float-building and the history of Carnival. Guests at the WWII Museum are greeted by airplanes suspended from the ceiling and a life-size replica of the "Higgins Boats" designed by New Orleans' own Andrew Higgins. Visitors can participate in a WWII submarine crew in Final Mission, or watch Beyond All Boundaries, a 4D movie experience.

Whether you're a fan of history, shopping, art, music, architecture, food or sports, the city of New Orleans invites you to participate in its rich traditions. With its blend of old-world charm and cosmopolitan style, New Orleans is the ultimate vacation destination for any type of getaway.