

Welcome to New Orleans

Known as the Crescent City thanks to its layout around the Mississippi River, New Orleans is a city like no other...

Founded in 1718 by the French explorer Bienville, New Orleans has evolved into one of the most unique cities in the world. A mix of European, African, Caribbean and American influences, the Big Easy has its own special atmosphere - Everything from the music to the architecture to the food is a delight to the senses.

When most people think of New Orleans, the first thing that comes to mind is the world famous French Quarter, known to the natives as the Vieux Carre (the old square). An amalgamation of stunning French and Spanish architecture, the Quarter is a natural gathering place for residents and visitors alike. And with a wide variety of restaurants, shops and entertainment, anyone who doesn't enjoy a trip to the Vieux Carre simply isn't trying.

Just to the west of the French Quarter is the historic Garden District. Home to a

to Uptown - indeed all over New Orleans. The young and the young-at-heart alike enjoy the beautiful floats and costumes, the beads, doubloons and trinkets and the wide spectrum of music that make up the revelry that surrounds "Fat Tuesday."

And if you're not done celebrating when Mardi Gras comes to a close, simply wait a few weeks and begin the party anew with the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival - known in short as Jazz Fest. A two-week collection of the world's finest musicians, Jazz Fest highlights the city's musical roots, showcasing jazz, blues and zydeco in addition to featuring classical and popular music.

New Orleans is also famous for its food, as many of the nation's finest chefs call the Crescent City home. Creole dishes such as gumbo, jambalaya and crawfish etouffe complement po-boys, red beans & rice and other traditional New Orleans fare.

Ranked as the second-best travel destination in the U.S. by Conde Nast Traveler's magazine, New Orleans is second-to-none in the hearts of its residents. The streetcars that still run along historic St. Charles Avenue are the nation's only mobile National Historic Landmark, while City Park is the country's largest municipal park. Nowhere else can you eat beignets at Cafe du Monde and board a bus marked "Cemetery" and not worry about your destination.

If tourist destinations fit the bill then head straight to the Audubon Zoological Garden, one of the top five zoos in the country before swinging by the Aquarium of the Americas located near the famous RiverWalk. And



don't forget to take a river cruise on a stately paddlewheel steamer.

The Big Easy has played host to more major sporting events than perhaps any other city in the world. The NFL has played eight Super Bowls in New Orleans, including three on the Tulane campus, with a ninth scheduled for 2002. The city has hosted three NCAA Men's Final Fours and two regional finals, as well as a women's Final Four.

The Sugar Bowl is the country's second-oldest collegiate bowl game and is played annually in the Super Dome, a facility so large that the Houston Astrodome could fit inside and still leave room for inside parking. In addition, the 1992 U.S. Olympic Track & Field Trials and the 1993 NCAA Track & Field Championships were both held in New Orleans.

With so much going for it, it is no wonder that residents say, "New Orleans, Proud to call it home!"

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beautiful array of mansion homes, the Garden District is also the site of Tulane University.

Of course, no discussion about New Orleans would be complete without mentioning Mardi Gras. Perhaps the world's largest free party, Mardi Gras is a celebration stretching for weeks from the French Quarter to the Garden District



Top: St. Louis Cathedral in the French Quarter.

Left: The Cabildo is one of many historical and educational attractions in and around New Orleans. Right: The Mississippi River, and its stately paddlewheel steamers, are as much New Orleans as gumbo and Mardi Gras.

