

THE “READY REFERENCE” LOCALS’ GUIDE OF FAVORITE THINGS TO DO IN NEW ORLEANS

Dining Out... As of May 6th, there were 888 restaurants in New Orleans, so there are plenty of choices. Call in advance for exact hours and days open, as many restaurants are closed on Sundays and Mondays. Here are some favorites from the staff of the Latin American Library, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library and friends.

Some Pricier Options:

Mr. B’s—across the street from the Hotel Monteleone. Great menu of Creole New Orleans and Southern Louisiana cooking and first-rate New Orleans-style Bloody Marys. <http://www.mrbsbistro.com/>

Galatoire’s Restaurant—A New Orleans classic, inventors of many local favorites of French Creole cuisine; one of New Orleans’ oldest, since 1905. No reservations; everybody stands in line until seated. 209 Bourbon St., French Quarter (504) 525-2021 <http://www.galatoires.com/>

K-Paul’s Louisiana Kitchen—owned by chef Paul Prudhomme, popularizer of Cajun cuisine and TV cooking-show icon. Reservations recommended, though for parties of two you can usually get seating. 416 Chartres Street, French Quarter (504) 524-7394 <http://www.kpauls.com/>

Bayona—Another great restaurant for French Creole cuisine, with a more contemporary, international touch. A splendid courtyard and homey interior. Reservations recommended. 430 Dauphine St., French Quarter (504) 525-4455 http://www.bayona.com/flash_content/bayona.htm

Antoine’s Restaurant—The grand-daddy of classic New Orleans restaurants, specializing in French Creole cuisine. Founded in 1840, it is the oldest family-run restaurant in the country. Ask for a tour of the building. Reservations required. 713 Saint Louis St., French Quarter (504) 581-4044. www.antoines.com

Commander’s Palace--- Garden District (about a ten-minute cab ride (\$13) from the Monteleone). Elegantly set in the middle of the renowned Garden District neighborhood. Go early and take a walk through historic Lafayette Cemetery right across the street. The turtle soup with sherry is the best. Reservations a must. Pricy but worth it. http://www.commanderspalace.com/new_orleans/index.php

Upperline—Uptown (about a 10-15 minute cab ride (\$13) from the Monteleone or via the St. Charles streetcar line... get off at Upperline Street). One of the best upscale

neighborhood restaurants serving New Orleans dishes with their own particular flair. Set in a typical “shotgun” cottage & surrounded by local art collected by the owner, Joanne Clevenger. Reservations required. 1413 Upperline Street. (504) 891-9822
<http://www.upperline.com/>

Lillette Restaurant—Uptown. About a 10-minute cab ride (\$13) from the Monteleone, or via the St. Charles streetcar line (get off at Antonine Street and walk five blocks “toward the river”). Great French-New Orleans bistro in an elegant setting. Try the poached pear with goat cheese/creme fraiche, violet honey and pistachio dessert.
3637 Magazine Street; 504-895-1636 <http://www.lilletterestaurant.com/>

Dick & Jenny’s—Neighborhood restaurant in the best modern New Orleans tradition... i.e., excellent, innovative food in a laid-back atmosphere; Uptown just two blocks from Tipitina’s Music Club. 4501 Tchoupitoulas Street (about a 10-minute cab ride). Medium pricey. <http://www.dickandjennys.com/>

Mat & Naddie’s—Uptown in the Riverbend-Carrollton area (about 15-20 minutes by cab). Ditto on the excellent, innovative food in laid-back atmosphere. No tourists or pretensions at this local Uptown favorite set in a 1850s-era shotgun-style house in the shadow of the Riverbend levee. Watch the trains go by as you dine in the outdoor patio. Reservations required. Medium pricey. 937 Leonidas (at Leake) “where Freret meets the river.” (504) 861-9600 <http://www.matandnaddies.com/web/>

More Modest Price Options:

Café du Monde-- beignets and chicory-laced coffee, New Orleans style. Riverfront just across from Jackson Square... great for people-watching from morning to late night.

Acme Oyster House—1 ½ blocks from the Monteleone. Don’t get put off by the lines outside, they move quickly. Great selection of boiled, broiled, fried, roasted, raw, and anything-else-you-can-think-of seafood. The classic New Orleans setting for sucking down a couple dozen raw oysters. No reservations; informal seating-- you might share with strangers who may become friends before dinner is over. 724 Iberville St, French Quarter. <http://www.acmeoyster.com/>

Willie Mae’s Scotch House—The ultimate in classic Southern cooking; the fried chicken is out of this world. A little-known gem of a New Orleans restaurant in the Tremé neighborhood, next to the French Quarter--take a taxi. The area right around the restaurant is safe, but it’s a long walk from the Monteleone through a tricky area. The restaurant will gladly call you a cab for the return trip. Allow some time, because they take their time to get it right. You also want to get there earlier in the afternoon because they start running out of popular items (such as the delicious Creole-style red beans and rice). Open for lunch, 11-5. See video on saving this New Orleans landmark after Katrina: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uVUNpkvAiA>

Central Grocery—Home of the Mufaletta, a Sicilian-inspired sandwich with Italian cold cuts and olive salad that has become a New Orleans staple. Order your Mufaletta and a Barq's root beer and sit in the back, or eat it up on the levee in front of Jackson Square as you watch the Mississippi River flow by. 923 Decatur St., French Quarter.

Casamento's—Old-school NOLA oyster bar in a vintage setting. Uptown, (about a 10-minute cab ride (\$13) from the Monteleone), or via the St. Charles streetcar line...get off at Napoleon and stroll five blocks down that lovely avenue "toward the river." 4330 Magazine St. Only if you are arriving early for the conference, as they close June, July and August. Open Tuesday – Saturday, 11:00 am - 2:00 pm & Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays 5:30 pm - 9:00 pm. <http://www.casamentosrestaurant.com/main/main.html>

Johnny's Po' Boys—The Po' Boy is the New Orleans version of the sub(marine) sandwich/hoagie/grinder. Portions are large; fried oyster po'boys are a specialty. 511 Saint Louis St., French Quarter. Closes at 3pm.

Salt 'n' Pepper Restaurant--- Pakistani food in New Orleans? Yes, and this very modest French Quarter option (it's in a converted Subway Sandwich Shop) is a favorite of local cabbies. Open daily for lunch through the late evening hours. A good place for a tasty, exotic meal in an area dominated by mediocre touristy restaurants. Plenty of vegetarian options on the menu. Located at 201 N. Peter St. at the corner of Iberville several blocks from the Monteleone "towards the river." (504) 561-6070.

<http://www.bestofneworleans.com/dispatch/2002-11-26/restreview.html>

Bennachin--- Head down toward the residential end of Royal Street for authentic West African cuisine with a New Orleans flair. Call in advance for hours and days of operation (504) 522-1230. 1212 Royal Street and it's delicious. Right next door is an Italian restaurant named **Mona Lisa**, similarly modestly priced and with the same sort of idiosyncratic mom-and-pop style atmosphere.

<http://neworleans.tribe.net/recommendation/Bennachin/new-orleans-la/1616ebdb-5193-4d36-b132-709284f25ea8>

Favorite Places for Hot New Orleans Music and Cool Drinks

Frenchmen Street—At the other end of the Quarter (away from downtown), Frenchmen offers a number of great venues all on a three-block strip that also has a good selection of interesting restaurants. Bourbon Street is worth a quick pass to see the tacky, carnivalesque image that much of the world projects onto the city, but Frenchmen Street is a real local hotspot for good local music of all varieties. Covers range from \$5-\$20, though several splendid options are entirely free! Check out **Snug Harbor** (626 Frenchmen St., 504-949-0696, also serves food in attached restaurant), the city's premier venue for contemporary jazz; **d.b.a.** (618 Frenchmen St., 504-942-3731); the **Blue Nile**

(532 Frenchmen St., 504-948-2583), the **Spotted Cat** (623 Frenchmen St., 504-943-3887), a small storefront club (listen and watch from the sidewalk!). Smaller still is the **Apple Barrel** (609 Frenchmen St., 504-949-9399). Frenchmen Street is in the Faubourg Marigny, an historic neighborhood across Esplanade Avenue next to the French Quarter. Walkable from the Hotel Monteleone (about 15 minutes). Check www.nola.com for a complete list of jazz and other music venues and current schedule.

Preservation Hall—Somewhat touristy, but authentic in its own way... you can really get up close and personal with some of the finest and most experienced traditional New Orleans musicians... all minus the cigarette smoke and clanking beer bottles. <http://www.preservationhall.com/home.php> 726 St. Peter St., French Quarter, 504-522-2841

Donna's Bar and Grill—Kick back with hot jazz and brass band music, and where you never know what to expect. Have a beer with the musicians in between sets. Home-style cooking available at certain hours. Call ahead for the schedule of gigs. On the edge of the Quarter at 800 N. Rampart, corner St. Ann. (504) 596-6914
<http://www.donnasbarandgrill.com/index.htm>

Tipitina's-- Two venues, one in the French Quarter. <http://www.tipitinas.com/default.asp>

Maple Leaf Bar—Great music venue and bar. 8316 Oak Street, Uptown, Carrollton area 866-5323 for recorded info. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maple_Leaf_Bar

Favorite Bars

Carousel Bar—Look no further than the very lobby of the Hotel Monteleone itself to enjoy your favorite libation on barstools kept warm in years past by the likes of Truman Capote and Tennessee Williams. STELLA!! STELLA!!

Columns Hotel Bar—The food isn't great, but the *ambiente* can't be beat whether inside or out on the porch. The drinks make up for the food, especially their Bloody Marys. On St. Charles Avenue Streetcar line—combine it with a walk through the Garden District. Free jazz on Fridays. 3811 Saint Charles Ave. St. Charles Streetcar stops in front (about 15 minutes from Monteleone) <http://www.thecolumns.com/>

Napoleon House-- The food is touristy and not very good, but the bar is great. 500 Chartres Street.

More French Quarter Bars... there is no shortage of them, but check out **The Bombay Club**, inside the Prince Conti Hotel on Conti Street. It's pricey, but has a tropical courtyard, great bar, and impeccable service. Nice place for lovebirds to steal away for a quiet rendezvous, or to go with your favorite book-dealer and talk some serious business. If serious drinkin' is on your mind, stop by **Johnny White's** on St. Peter St., across from Preservation Hall. A borderline dive, it's cheap, exudes FQ bohemian style, and made international news when it stayed open without power during the Katrina crisis. Yes, it's

touristy, but **Pat O'Brien's** original bar on St. Peter adjacent to Preservation Hall, serves without doubt the best mint julep on the planet. Skip the hurricane and have a julep. About a dozen bars line the several-block long hipster corridor of Decatur Street on the downriver side of Jackson Square. **Molly's at the Market** (1107 Decatur) can be considered ground-zero for this scene. Inexpensive, a good beer list, never closes and full of New Orleans “characters.”

Museums and Galleries, and more New Orleans “cultcha”

Ogden Museum of Southern Art

Billed as the largest and most comprehensive collection of Southern art in the world. In the Warehouse District, walkable from the Hotel Monteleone (about 15 minutes) 925 Camp Street 504.539.9600 info@ogdenmuseum.org

The Backstreet Cultural Museum—“A powerhouse of knowledge, the **Backstreet Cultural Museum** is the essence of New Orleans. Its historic location is filled with exhibits reflecting aspects of the unique cultural traditions and institutions of African-American culture in New Orleans – Mardi Gras Indians, Jazz Funerals and Social Aid & Pleasure Clubs.” A small-scale museum by the people for the people. 1116 St. Claude Avenue, (504) 522-4806, just above the French Quarter in the Treme neighborhood. Take a cab, or walk with a group of people because the neighborhood can be considered dangerous. <http://www.backstreetmuseum.org/>

Julia Street--“The 600 block of Julia Street has a collection of thirteen mid-19th century townhouses often referred to as Julia Row or the Thirteen Sisters. Impressive as they are, architecture isn't the real reason to come to Julia Street and its environs -- it's art. This area, dubbed the "SoHo of the South," now houses some of the city's best art galleries, and Julia Street itself counts some of the more interesting among its restored warehouses and townhouses. Galleries include Marguerite Oestreicher Fine Arts (626 Julia), Galerie Simonne Stern (518), Arthur Roger (432) and Stills Zinsel (328) for a taste of what's happening on the New Orleans art scene. A block and a half south of Julia is ... the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC), the heart and soul of the area's arts renaissance showcasing local artists.” 900 Camp Street. Adapted from Elaine Sosa http://www.sallys-place.com/travel/n_america/eus_new_orleans.htm

Faulkner House Books—In the 1920s William Faulkner lived in the room where the bookstore is located. He shared the house with William Spratling, who taught architecture at Tulane during the same period. (Spratling later settled in Taxco, Mexico where he brought about a renaissance in the Mexican silver industry.) The bookstore is devoted to literature—everything Faulkner, New Orleans, Southern, U.S., Latinamerican and world literature in English translation. There is a display case tucked in a corner with

first editions of major literary works, and the owners Joe di Salvo and Rosemary James, are very knowledgeable. A joy to visit and chat with them!

624 Pirate's Alley (behind St. Louis Cathedral) in the French Quarter (504) 524-2940

Hours are 10-6 seven days a week.

Free!! Take the Algiers Ferry to Algiers Point. Costs nothing, and gets you a million-dollar view of the Quarter and Downtown. Have a pint Guinness at the **Crown & Anchor Pub** (a borderline dive, moderate prices), one block from the ferry terminal. Food at the **Dry Dock** is popular with locals. Board Ferry at the foot of Canal Street near the **Aquarium**....leaves every 15-20 minutes.

French Quarter—Just meander around or see <http://www.frenchquarter.com/#> for more, including an interactive map. The Friends of the Cabildo give walking tours with licensed, knowledgeable guides on a variety of themes such as architecture, jazz, folklore and more. Proceeds go to the Louisiana State Museum. Two-hour tours start out at the 1850 House Museum Store at 523 St. Ann St. on Jackson Square. Daily tours Tuesday-Sunday 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. No reservations; \$12 for adults. Recommended: Historical walking tour of the French Quarter with Robert Freeman (speaks Spanish and Portuguese) who emphasizes the Spanish and Latino aspects of the city's history. <http://www.friendsofthecabildo.org/>

Walk around the **Garden District**—This is the “American” part of New Orleans, settled by Northerners after 1803, when Louisiana was purchased from the French. Splendid ante-bellum architecture throughout the neighborhood. Take the St. Charles Avenue streetcar on Carondelet and Canal Streets, get off at St. Charles and Washington St.

Walk along **Magazine Street**-- A six-mile-long stretch of this Garden District and Uptown thoroughfare features some of the best antique stores, art galleries, craft shops, clothing boutiques, coffee houses, restaurants, most of them housed in quirky Victorian shotguns to be found all over the city.

Disaster tour—There are several local tour routes through the areas devastated by the 2005 flood in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, including the Ninth Ward, New Orleans East, and the Lakeview area.

Things to Do Outside of New Orleans

Swamp Tour, Plantation Tour, Lafayette and Cajun country; check your tourist brochure for more information.