

# 25 FREE

## THINGS TO DO IN NEW ORLEANS

Charm is free, and New Orleans has more than its fair share. Below is a list of things you can do to keep your vacation budget in check. Mardi Gras may be called “the greatest free show on Earth,” but it’s not the only free show in town.

### 1. People Watch in the French Quarter

From tourists and tarot card readers to mimes and street musicians, some of the best people watching anywhere can be found in the French Quarter.

### 2. Walk Our Historic Districts

The New Orleans Garden District is a stunning architectural museum and very different from the Old World architecture you can experience in the French Quarter. Visit The Preservation Resource Center at 923 Tchoupitoulas Street for free exhibits, maps of all New Orleans’ National Historic Districts and more.



### 3. Get Jazzed

Stroll Bourbon, Frenchmen and Fulton streets at night, when live music pours out into the street. There are also lots of street musicians in the Quarter on any given day. Take it in.

### 4. Go to a Festival!

Like breathing, listening to music is free in New Orleans. Enjoy one of the many free festivals in the city including Mardi Gras, French Quarter Fest, Po-Boy Fest, Vieux-to-Do, Satchmo SummerFest and more. Come out and play!

### 5. Visit the Jean Lafitte National Park

The Visitor Center at 419 Decatur Street, in the French Quarter, shares the fascinating history and unique traditions of the city and the delta through exhibits and film.

### 6. Enjoy New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

Learn about the history and culture of New Orleans jazz at the visitor center at 916 N. Peters Street. Enjoy free ranger-led demonstrations, walks and talks, video documentaries and live music.



## 7. Take a Jazz History Walking Tour

Explore six New Orleans neighborhoods and their connection to jazz history. Self-guided maps highlight venues, businesses and homes of New Orleans music history. Download free maps at [www.nps.gov/jazz/historyculture/places.htm](http://www.nps.gov/jazz/historyculture/places.htm).

## 8. Experience Our Parks

Jog, picnic, fly a kite or just sunbathe in Woldenberg Park, Audubon Park or City Park, home of the Dueling Oaks, where matters of honor were settled by gentlemen in days gone by.

## 9. Go to Market

Stroll the famous open-air French Market or visit the local art markets in Mid-City, Bywater and Palmer Park. Find out why New Orleans was named No. 1 in the country for flea markets in a CNN TravelandLeisure.com poll.

## 10. Art About Town

See artists at work in Jackson Square. Check out the galleries in the French Quarter, the Arts District, the French Market and on Magazine Street.

## 11. Be Moved by Our Spectacular Churches

Pause and reflect at historic landmarks such as breathtaking St. Louis Cathedral, Our Lady of Guadalupe or St. Augustine.



## 12. Go Gallery Hopping

The Newcomb Art Gallery is a small gem of a museum filled with metal work, embroidery and world-renowned Newcomb Pottery. The Historic New Orleans Collection and the Williams Research Center in the French Quarter also offer free exhibits you won't want to miss.

## 13. Discover The Sidney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden

One of the most impressive collections of contemporary sculpture in America. Meandering footpaths and pedestrian bridges guide you to more than 50 masterworks set among reflecting lagoons, magnolias and Spanish-moss-laden oaks.

## 14. Gather at the Piazza d'Italia

Come admire the Piazza d'Italia, a monument to New Orleans' Italian-American community. Designed by renowned architect Charles Moore, the piazza gained notoriety as a symbol of late Post-Modernism. Adjacent to the piazza is the American Italian Renaissance Foundation Museum, which tells the history of Italian Americans in the Southeast.

## 15. Watch the Waters Dance at Spanish Plaza

Spain dedicated this plaza in 1976 to the City of New Orleans in remembrance of their common historical past and as a pledge of fraternity in the future. At its focal point is a fountain surrounded by the seals of the provinces of Spain.

## 16. Call on Old Man River

Take the free ferry to Algiers or take in the views from the Moon Walk, Riverwalk or Woldenberg Park.

## 17. View Our Statues (and We're Not Talking Mimes)

Andrew Jackson, Robert E. Lee, Louis Armstrong, Mother River, Ignatius Reilly from *A Confederacy of Dunces*—all have been immortalized in New Orleans.

## 18. Catch the Fun at the Germaine Cazenave Wells Mardi Gras Museum

This museum in Arnaud's Restaurant at 813 Rue Bienville is free and open to the public during restaurant hours. The collection of Carnival court gowns, costumes and other memorabilia provides a rare glimpse of the private side of Mardi Gras.



## 19. Take Yourself on a Literary Tour

See where Tennessee Williams (722 Toulouse), William Faulkner (624 Pirate's Alley), Truman Capote (711 Royal), Thornton Wilder (623 Bourbon) Walker Percy (1820 Milan) and Anne Rice (1239 First) lived.

## 20. Visit Haunted French Quarter Sites

Call on Brennan's Restaurant at 417 Royal, said to be haunted by three ghosts, including the chef who created bananas Foster; Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carré at 616 St. Peter, where several ghosts have been spotted, including the actress Caroline; and 734 Royal, where the spirit of Julie walks across the roof between midnight and dawn, only during the month of December. Grab a brochure on haunted New Orleans and create your own tour.



## 21. Go on a Rock 'n' Roll Tour

Visit 1208 Caffin Avenue, the home of Fats Domino; 838 N. Rampart, the former J & M Studio where Little Richard recorded "Tutti-Frutti" and "Good Golly Miss Molly;" 826-830 St. Louis, purported to be the House of the Rising Sun; and 1500 N. Claiborne Avenue, the location of the Ernie K-Doe Mother-in-Law Lounge. There's more than jazz history in New Orleans. Come explore it.

## 22. Tailgate at the Louisiana Superdome

The Superdome is the largest fixed-domed structure in the world. More Super Bowls have been played at the Louisiana Superdome than at any other sports facility. Visitors are invited to take a walk around the exterior or enjoy a tailgating party before a game.

## 23. Stroll Down Historic Exchange Alley

At the corner of Canal and Exchange Alley once sat the first motion picture theater in the United States, Vitascope Hall. The building at 111 Exchange Place has a rare cast-iron front. Lee Harvey Oswald lived at 126 Exchange Place and often hung out in the Pool Hall below his apartment. Come see it all.

## 24. Read The Famous Door

Dating back to 1934, The Famous Door is the oldest live music club still in business on Bourbon Street. Many celebrities and musicians have autographed the front door of the club—everyone from Desi Arnaz to Walt Disney.

## 25. Be a "Voluntourist"

Outside of the traditional tourist centers in New Orleans you'll find many neighbors still recovering from Hurricane Katrina. If you have time, we encourage you to spend a couple of hours helping out. Those who do find the experience to be an enriching one. For volunteer opportunities with Habitat For Humanity, Rebuilding Together and other organizations, visit [NewOrleansOnline.com](http://NewOrleansOnline.com) or [NewOrleansInfo.com](http://NewOrleansInfo.com).