

Natchitoches Area Convention & Visitors Bureau  
780 Front Street, Suite 100  
Natchitoches, Louisiana 71457  
318-352-8072 | 800-259-1714  
www.natchitoches.com  
Executive Director: Arlene Gould  
Groups & Tourism Sales Manager: Sarah Zeagler  
groups@natchitoches.com



## GENERAL ITINERARY | Natchitoches, LA

Experience the charm of the original French colony in Louisiana. Natchitoches (Nack-a-tish) was established in 1714, and retains its European flavor through its architecture, heritage and lifestyle. Chances are, the thing you'll love most, (aside from the famous meat pies) is the charming 33-block Landmark historic district - a shopper's paradise and a bed & breakfast lover's dream. The Natchitoches area offers numerous attractions, museums, Creole plantations, a National Park, and year around festivals including the Festival of Lights, Louisiana's premiere holiday destination.

### EXPLORE | Los Adaes State Historic Site

6354 Hwy 485 Robeline, LA 71449 | (318) 356-5555 – *Call for Hours & Tour Times*

Los Adaes, the symbol of New Spain in Louisiana, was once the capital of Texas and the scene of a unique cooperation among the French, the Spanish and the indigenous Native Americans. An area rich in archaeological finds, it thrives today as one of Louisiana's most intriguing state historic sites. Built to counter any further French intrusion into Spanish territory.

<https://www.canerivernha.org/fort-st-jean-baptiste-los-adaes-state-historic-sites>



### EXPLORE | Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Historic Site

155 rue Jefferson | (318) 357-3101 – *Call for Hours & Tour Times*

Experience the French Colonial life as you are guided through the fort by costumed interpreters. The full sized replica of Fort St. Jean Baptiste, is located on Cane River Lake (formerly the Red River), a few hundred yards from the original fort site, set up by Louis Antoine Juchereau de St. Denis in 1714. Nearly 2,000 treated pine logs form the palisade and approximately 250,000 board feet of treated lumber went into the construction of the buildings.

<https://www.crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-parks/historic-sites/fort-st-jean-baptiste-state-historic-site/index>



### LUNCH/DINNER | Historic District Dining

All historic district restaurants locally owned and operated serving authentic Creole, Cajun and Southern dishes. All restaurants in Louisiana are smoke free. Call for group reservations.



### EXPLORE | Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame & Northwest Louisiana History Museum

800 Front St. | (318) 357-2492 – *Call for Hours & Tour Times*

Discover the dazzling state museum complex in historic downtown Natchitoches. The Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame's collections celebrate more than 300 sports achievements through exhibits and interactive media. The Northwest Louisiana History Museum journeys through unique cultural traditions from early native-American civilizations to the present. Named *Top Global Architecture* Project in 2014, the building evokes the region's natural resources.



### SHOPPING | National Historic Landmark District

At the heart of Natchitoches is the enchanting historic hub showcasing over 300 years of Louisiana French colonial history. The downtown district serves as a shopping and dining paradise. You can find everything you're looking for including antiques, home décor, books, local art, kitchenware, clothing, souvenirs, tasty treats and much more! Each shop has its own special Southern Charm.



### EXPLORE | Grand Ecore Visitor Center

106 Tauzin Island Rd. | (318) 356-5555 – *Call for Hours & Tour Times*

Discover exhibits educating and informing the public about the Water and the Corps of Engineers' role in development, preservation, and enhancement of the water resources in the region, as well as the geology, paleontology, and Native American cultures of the region. Also known for the role it played during the Civil War as a Confederate outpost guarding the Red River from Union advancement.

<https://www.canerivernha.org/grand-ecore-visitor-center>



### **DISCOVER | Flying Heart Brewery**

108 Mill St. | (318) 238-2739 – *Call for Hours & Tour Times*

The brewery is housed in a refurbished cotton gin building that is nearly a century old. The overlap between this historic space and the birth of a new business is a perfect representation of what Natchitoches is all about: rooted in history but constantly evolving.



### **DISCOVER | Cane River Heritage Trail**

A Louisiana Scenic Byway

Once a primary channel of the Red River, the Cane River is now an oxbow lake bordered by corn and soybean farms, thick stands of sugar cane and pecan orchards. The Cane River National Heritage Trail begins in charming Natchitoches, which many recall as the setting for the film “Steel Magnolias.” Tracking the river the trail winds through rich farmland and pretty towns. It ends at Cloutierville, once the home of writer Kate Chopin. Along the way, views include plantation homes, distinctive Creole architecture and historic landmarks, along with graceful Southern magnolias, crepe myrtles, chinaberry trees and live oaks that flourish on the river’s red-soil banks.

[www.canerivernha.org](http://www.canerivernha.org)



### **EXPLORE | Melrose on the Cane**

3533 Hwy 119 Melrose, LA 71452 | (318) 379-0055 – *Call for Hours & Tour Times*

Discover the two-hundred year history of beautiful Melrose Plantation founded in 1796 by Louis Metoyer, one of the ten Franco-African children of slave, Marie Therese CoinCoin, and Claude Thomas Pierre Metoyer, a merchant at Ft St. Jean Baptiste. Their descendants began the unique Isle Brevelle community whose rich culture continues today. Explore the wonders of the early 20th century artists retreat founded by Carmelite “Cammie” Garrett Henry, and follow the discovery of Clementine Hunter, one-time Melrose cook, as she emerged to become a celebrated Louisiana folk artist. See her acclaimed murals in their home, African House, designated a “National Treasure” in 2015 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Every spring, Melrose Plantation hosts Louisiana’s longest-running arts and crafts festival.



### **EXPLORE | Cane River Creole National Historical Park: Oakland Plantation**

4386 Hwy 494 Natchez, LA 71456 | 318-352-0383, ext. 316 – *Call for Hours & Tour Times*

Plantations resembled small towns with numerous buildings. Oakland has 17 original outbuildings still standing including two pigeoniers, an overseer’s house, log corn crib, carriage house, cook’s cabin, mule barn (originally a smokehouse), carpenter shop and cabins. The historic property is a National Bicentennial Farm, only one of two such Farms west of the Mississippi River, both of which are located in Natchitoches Parish. The National Park Service acquired Oakland in the late 1990s as part of Cane River Creole National Historical Park.

\*Free Admission

[www.nps.gov/cari/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/cari/index.htm)



### **EXPLORE | St. Augustine Catholic Church**

2250 Hwy 484 Melrose, LA 71452 | (318) 379-2521 – *Call for Hours & Tour Times*

A historic Roman Catholic Church and cemetery and is the cultural center of Cane River’s historic Créole community. Established as a mission church in 1829, by the freed slave Nicolas Augustin Metoyer, St. Augustine is celebrated as the first church built by and for free people of color in Louisiana. The church and cemetery are on the National Register of Historic Places. Because of its significance to Catholic and Créole history, St. Augustine also is listed on the Louisiana African American Heritage Trail.



### **EXPLORE | Cane River Creole National Historical Park: Magnolia Plantation**

5549 Hwy. 119, Derry, LA 71416 | 318-352-0383, ext. 316 – *Call for Hours & Tour Times*

Prior to the Civil War Magnolia was one of the largest plantations in Natchitoches Parish. Original outbuildings include a blacksmith shop, plantation store, slave hospital that at various times housed the owners and overseer, eight brick cabins, and gin barn. The gin barn houses a wood screw cotton press, the last such press remaining in its original site in the United States. \*Free Admission

\*Detour required. Leave St. Augustine to Hwy. 1 South then turn on Hwy. 119 North

[www.nps.gov/cari/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/cari/index.htm)



**This is a sample itinerary.**

\*Group tours please call and make reservations to ensure proper staffing to accommodate your group.

Updated: 10/12/2023