

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 15, 2021**

St. Tammany Parish Tourist Commission  
68099 Hwy. 59  
Mandeville, LA 70471  
Contact: Tanya Leader, VP of Sales  
Cell (985) 705-9479, Office (985) 892-0520  
[Tanya@LouisianaNorthshore.com](mailto:Tanya@LouisianaNorthshore.com)  
[www.LouisianaNorthshore.com](http://www.LouisianaNorthshore.com)

Louisiana River Parishes  
671 Belle Terre Blvd  
LaPlace, LA 70068  
Contact: Willma Harvey  
(985) 359-2783  
[Willma@LARiverParishes.com](mailto:Willma@LARiverParishes.com)  
[www.LARiverParishes.com](http://www.LARiverParishes.com)

Jefferson CVB  
1221 Elmwood Park Blvd Ste. 411  
New Orleans, LA 70123  
Contact: Theresa Mule  
(504) 818-1258  
[Theresa@VisitJeffersonParish.com](mailto:Theresa@VisitJeffersonParish.com)  
[www.VisitJeffersonParish.com](http://www.VisitJeffersonParish.com)

## **Tri-Parish Itinerary highlighting Native, Creole and African American History Released**

*Louisiana Northshore, Louisiana's River Parishes, and Visit Jefferson Parish debut new group itinerary*

(MANDEVILLE, LA)— On July 7, the St. Tammany Parish Tourist Commission, River Parishes Tourist Commission, and Jefferson CVB gave a sneak peek to a select collection of travel operators and group tour planners via a virtual release of *The Soul of South Louisiana*, a new joint group itinerary highlighting the Native, Creole and African American people, heritage, culture and way of life in the tri-parish region.

“This tour was created for people of all ages to learn about the untold history, stories, and traditions that help to make up our rich South Louisiana culture,” said Tanya Leader, VP of Sales for the St. Tammany Parish Tourist Commission. *The Soul of South Louisiana* itinerary was conceptualized, researched and developed collaboratively by the respective destination marketing organizations over a period of eight months. *The Soul of South Louisiana* can be booked through each of the destination marketing organizations and is ideal for groups of 10-25 people, though 50 or more can also be accommodated.

The five-day group tour is customizable, and features a multitude of destinations in the tri-parish region that honor the contributions and untold history of Native, Creole, and African Americans. Certified Tour Guide Martha Martinez of YAYA Louisiana Tours and Travel is available as a step-on guide to accompany and lead the groups.

Louisiana Northshore spotlights the Bayou Lacombe Museum, located in the first St. Tammany Parish schoolhouse for Native Americans and Creole people, where groups can visit a Three Sisters and Medicine Wheel Garden. Other sites of interest include the Madisonville Historic Museum, Jean Baptiste Lang Creole House, the Dew Drop Jazz and Benevolent Hall, and the nine Native and African American markers on the Historic Mandeville Marker Tour. Fontainebleau State Park presents historical markers honoring the 153 enslaved people who worked at Bernard de Marigny de Mandeville's sugar plantation as well as Native people who called this land home for thousands of years before it was settled by Europeans.

Louisiana River Parishes offers a tour of Whitney Plantation, presenting exhibits throughout the plantation depicting the harsh labor the enslaved endured on sugarcane plantations and a memorial dedicated to the 1811 Slave Revolt. Louisiana River Parishes also presents a musical journey with the exhibits of famous Creole trombonist Edward “Kid” Ory at the 1811 Kid Ory History House, and the Historic Riverlands Soul River Musical Journey through music journeys that represent life after slavery. Sites also on the tour include Destrehan Plantation with an exhibit featuring the 1811 Slave Revolt procession, and the Rost Home Colony exhibit, which explains how the plantation transformed into a facility that transitioned newly freed enslaved persons into wage earners.

Jefferson Parish visits the Marsalis Mansion Motel Marker, Camp Parapet, a safe haven for escaped slaves during the Union's occupation where they were housed, fed, and trained during the remaining years of the Civil War, and gospel artist Mahalia Jackson's Gravesite. Also featured is True Vine Baptist Church, the oldest and longest running African American Church on the West Bank of Jefferson Parish. The Barataria Preserve of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, formerly part of the infamous pirate Jean Lafitte's smuggling route for the illegal slave trade, now offers serene walking and birding trails.



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**Tanya Leader,  
St. Tammany Parish  
Tourist Commission**





# THE SOUL OF SOUTH LOUISIANA



Discover the untold history of Native, Creole  
and African Americans in South Louisiana





**ARRIVE AT THE LOUISIANA NORTHSORE • BEGIN YOUR TOUR ON THE NORTHSORE TO  
LEARN ABOUT AFRICAN AMERICAN AND NATIVE PEOPLE, THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS & HERITAGE.**

# DAY 1

## **CAJUN ENCOUNTERS SWAMP TOUR**

Louisiana's 1st nature conservancy area. Learn about the history, culture and way of life of the indigenous people that lived on the Northshore. Groups with a flexible schedule may add 1 ½ hours for an authentic seafood boil or cochon de lait at the onsite Cajun pavilion.

## **BAYOU LACOMBE MUSEUM**

Take a guided tour through St. Tammany Parish's first schoolhouse for Native Americans and Creole people. Visit a Chuka and the Three Sisters and Medicine Wheel Gardens. Groups visiting on November 1st can partake in the Choctaw and Creole tradition of Les Toussaints les Lumieres du Morts.

## **MADISONVILLE HISTORIC MUSEUM AND CEMETERY WALKING TOUR**

Visit one of the most diverse towns in Louisiana during the early 20th century. Tour the former 1911 courthouse and jail with displays featuring Native American artifacts and shipbuilding history then walk to the nearby cemetery for intriguing stories of those who once lived in town.



# DAY 2

## **VISITOR CENTER AT FONTAINEBLEAU STATE PARK**

Tour the visitor center, remains of the former sugar plantation and historical markers for both the 153 enslaved people who comprised the skilled workforce of the plantation and lived at the Alley of Oaks as well as the indigenous people of the area.

## **HISTORICAL FILM OF MANDEVILLE AT THE TRAILHEAD VISITOR CENTER & GUIDED HISTORIC MANDEVILLE MARKER TOUR**

Drive, stroll or cycle as you absorb the rich history of Mandeville through this QR code tour. Tour includes 41 marker sites; including 9 Native and African American markers.

## **TOUR THE JEAN BAPTISTE LANG CREOLE HOUSE**

Learn about the construction of this Creole summer cottage for the affluent New Orleanian built by the enslaved who also worked on the owner's tobacco farm.

### **VISIT THE DEW DROP JAZZ AND BENEVOLENT HALL**

Established in 1895, and is the oldest unaltered jazz hall in the world. Noted musicians that have graced the stage include Bunk Johnson, Buddy Petit and Papa Celestin.

**MEAL SUGGESTIONS:** Annadele's Plantation, Middendorf's Restaurant or Celina's Soul Food Cafe

### **ADD-ON: TANGIPAHOA AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MUSEUM**

Opened in 2007, groups can visit the comprehensive collection of African-American murals, artifacts, photographs and artwork.



**DEPART FOR LOUISIANA'S RIVER PARISHES • FOLLOW THE SHORELINE OF THE MIGHTY MISSISSIPPI RIVER TO LEARN ABOUT THE ENSLAVED, THEIR REVOLT AND THE HOMES THEY HELPED CONSTRUCT.**

## **DAY 3**

### **WHITNEY PLANTATION**

Experience Whitney Plantation by audio tour, presenting exhibits throughout the plantation depicting the harsh labor the enslaved endured on sugarcane plantations and a memorial dedicated to the 1811 Slave Revolt.

### **1811/KID ORY HISTORIC HOUSE**

The 1811/Kid Ory Historic House features the music collection and exhibits of Edward "Kid" Ory, the famous Creole trombonist who played alongside of Louis Armstrong, Joe "King" Oliver, and Mutt Carey. The museum is housed in the original Woodland Plantation House, which is where the 1811 Slave Revolt rebellion began.

### **HISTORIC RIVERLANDS SOUL RIVER MUSICAL JOURNEY**

Life after slavery is presented at Historic Riverlands, where you will take a journey through music genres that illustrate music themes associated with African Americans during segregation, integration, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Black Lives Matter Movements.





# DAY 4

## **CAJUN PRIDE SWAMP TOURS**

Learn the truth and legend about Julia Brown, a prominent African American landowner, local healer (traiteur), midwife and Voodoo priestess on a relaxing Cajun Pride Swamp Tour. The tour features a replica of Julia's house in the swamps surrounded by the primitive beauty of moss-draped Cypress trees and sightings of alligators and other wildlife.

## **DESTREHAN PLANTATION**

Destrehan Plantation offers an abundance of African Creole history throughout the entire plantation. A tour of the Main House features the craftsmanship by Charles Paquet, an enslaved master builder who designed and built the house, an entire exhibit of the 1811 Slave Revolt procession, and the Rost Home Colony exhibit, which explains how the plantation transformed into a facility to help transition newly freed slaves into wage earners and provided them with lodging and food.

**MEAL SUGGESTIONS:** Ace's Soul Food Diner, ZoraChristina Catering and Cafe, or Clays Café

## **ADD-ON: FINDING OUR ROOTS AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM**

Tour the museum's galleries centered on such subjects as the reconstruction era, elected officials, slavery, segregation, the civil rights movement and leadership, family and community, educators and clergy, sugar cane workers, doctors and businessmen, inventors, musicians, and writers.

**DEPART FOR JEFFERSON PARISH • OUR TRAIL WILL WIND ITS WAY THROUGHOUT THE EAST AND WEST BANKS OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER THROUGH JEFFERSON PARISH, HIGHLIGHTING DIFFERENT HISTORIC POINTS OF INTEREST.**

## **JOHN H. MARTYN SCHOOL**

Formerly known as Shrewsbury School and before that the Colored High School; it was one of the only African American schools on the East bank of Jefferson Parish prior to integration.

## **MARSALIS MANSION MOTEL MARKER**

The motel was a luxury accommodation safe for African American travelers during the civil rights movement. It attracted guests like Martin Luther King, Jr., Ray Charles, Thurgood Marshall, and Etta James who were not allowed to stay where they were performing.

## **CAMP PARAPET**

A safe haven for escaped slaves during the Union's occupation where they were housed, fed and trained during the remaining years of the Civil War.

## **MAHALIA JACKSON'S GRAVESITE**

The granddaughter of slaves, Mahalia Jackson was an American gospel singer who, over her 40-year career, played a major role in the creation and spread of gospel blues throughout black churches across the US. She was the first gospel artist to be inducted on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

# DAY 5

## SEVEN OAKS PLANTATION MARKER

An impressive Louisiana Greek Revival mansion, had a huge impact on creating the pocket of town “Salaville”, which was the urban core of Westwego where former slaves settled with their families.

## TRUE VINE BAPTIST CHURCH

The oldest and longest running African American Church on the West Bank of Jefferson Parish. Since 1865, it has been a haven to congregate, worship, and celebrate safely in the old Westwego neighborhood.

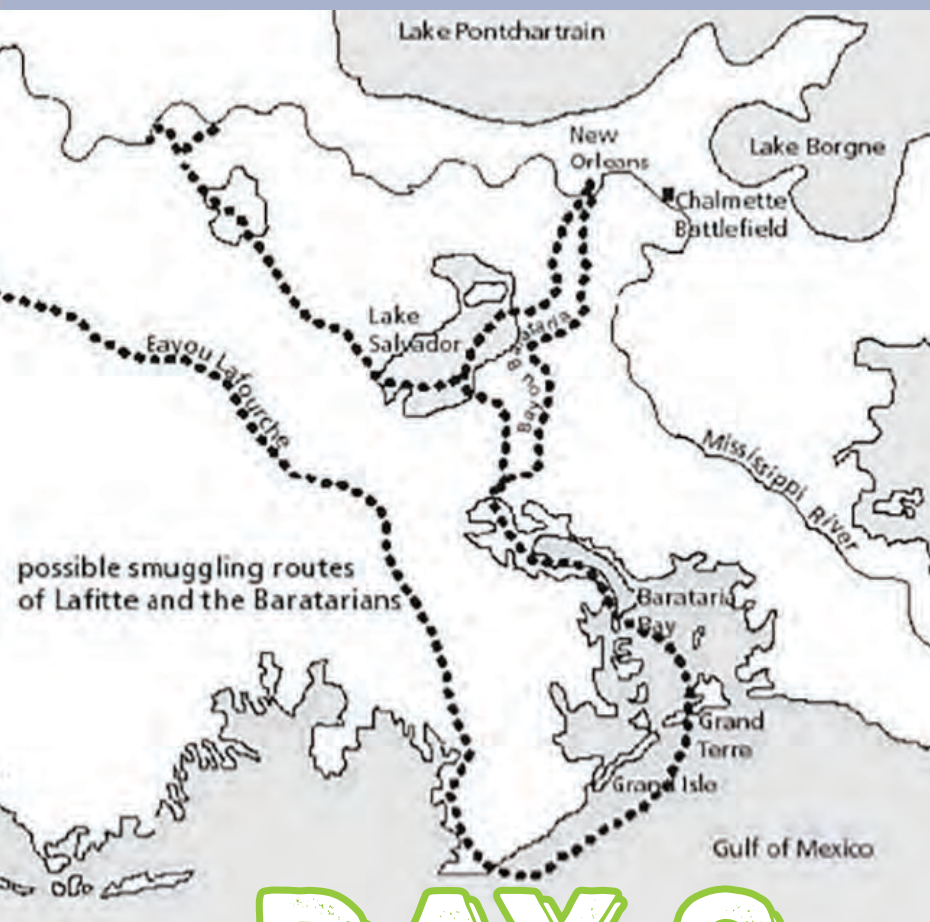
## BARATARIA PRESERVE OF JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE FORMERLY PART OF THE JEAN LAFITTE SLAVE SMUGGLING ROUTE

Around 1807 when importing slaves became illegal, the infamous pirate Jean Lafitte began smuggling goods and slaves through its hidden bayous and waterways. Today the Preserve features beautiful walking and birding trails, a kids activity center, and more.

## JEAN LAFITTE HARBOR

Located on the smuggling route of the pirate, Jean Lafitte, where you can take a ride to the past on one of the private tour boats, book a private fishing charter with a local grown fishing guide, or rent a kayak and experience nature at your own pace.

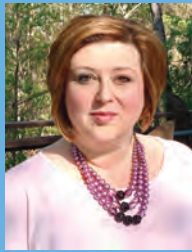
**MEAL SUGGESTIONS:** Dine at 3 Southern Girls or Le Brane’s Creole Cuisine



# DAY 6

**DEPART FOR NEW ORLEANS AND BEYOND**





**TANYA LEADER**  
Tanya@LouisianaNorthshore.com  
800.634.9443  
www.LouisianaNorthshore.com



**ZONDRA JONES**  
Zondra@LouisianaNorthshore.com  
800.634.9443  
www.LouisianaNorthshore.com



**WILLMA HARVEY**  
Willma@LARiverParishes.com  
985.359.2783  
www.LARiverParishes.com

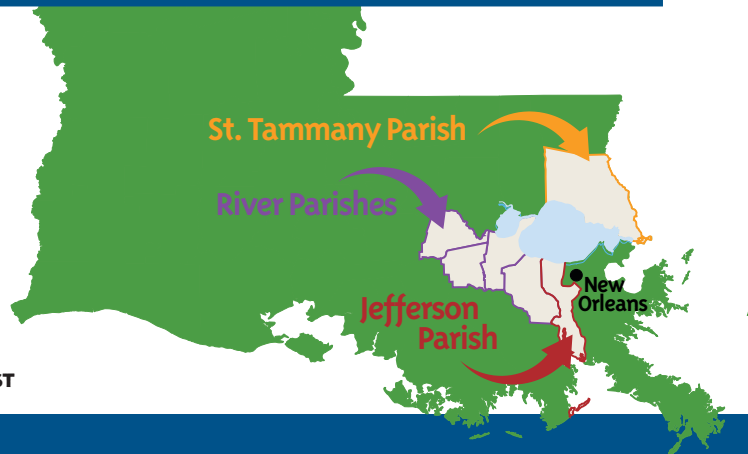


**THERESA MULE**  
Theresa@VisitJeffersonParish.com  
504.818.1258  
www.VisitJeffersonParish.com



**CHARLENE HALE**  
Charlene@VisitJeffersonParish.com  
504.731.7083 (ext. 202)  
www.VisitJeffersonParish.com

Distance from St. Tammany to River Parishes	50 miles
Distance from River Parishes to Jefferson	23 miles
Distance from Jefferson to New Orleans	11 miles



\*CERTIFIED TOUR GUIDE UPON REQUEST