



Bernyce & Jerry's.....2018 Convention Monthly Update.....

(6th of an informational series of updates)

So, the Cajuns came to Louisiana around the 1700s as Acadians from the French-Canadian region, Nova Scotia. They didn't come to Louisiana by choice (they were exiled), but they brought with them some French country cooking. In Louisiana, the Acadians found all sorts of new ingredients, like oysters, alligator, crawfish, catfish, shrimp... you know, Southern stuff. And, man, did they relish in the new spices: pepper and cayenne? Yes, please. Cultural influences from Spain and African-Americans, as well as local Native Americans, crafted what is now known as Cajun cuisine. Cajun food relies heavily on seafood, keeping with the tradition of cooking what is readily available (and that means the bayou.) Having access to new spices and vegetables also crafted the cuisine. Almost every stew is made of a base of onion, celery, and bell pepper, or what they call, the Holy Trinity. Spice is key, and roux (fat and flour, yum) is used as a thickener. Everything Cajun is saucy. Cajuns took their food seriously and celebrated its flavors frequently. There's still the annual Crawfish Festival (if it ain't crawfish, it ain't Cajun) and rural Mardi Gras, as well as the family boucherie. Sounds so French, doesn't it? (Because it is.)

We will be offering a memorable and unique event to orientate everyone on Monday at the host hotel with authentic cuisine by inviting the New Orleans School of Cooking for their famous demonstration. You will delight at the way they teach the basics of Louisiana cooking in a way you'll never forget. Fun is the primary ingredient in their presentation. Then partake in their delectable luncheon consisting of Shrimp Bisque, Chicken and Smoked Sausage Jambalaya, Bread Pudding & Pralines!

The following evening, returning a little more conventional, we present an elegant dining experience to recognize last year's National Championship competitors along with the Annual NCCC Awards honoring outstanding individual service to our organization. Opening with a house salad, our entrée selections follow with a 10oz. Charbroiled Ribeye, Chicken Picatta or a Gluten Free Vegetarian Plate; all served traditionally with garlic mashed potatoes & the chef's vegetable Medley. Concluding, of course, a slice of Cheesecake topped with Bananas Foster.

Without a doubt, Mardi Gras is synonymous with indulgence: of food, of drink, of fun. That's because in this predominantly Catholic city, Mardi Gras (French for "Fat Tuesday") is the last celebration before the austere season of Lent, a 40-day period marked by abstinence from meat and other indulgences. Want to support that sentiment and take part in the old New Orleans tradition of sharing — and excess? At Mardi Gras, food is a way of taking care of each other. It's Louisiana's way of expressing affection. For that reason our Grand Masquerade Party & Gala menu will be inspired by the portable foods revelers love to bring to the parades. Food stations will surround the party room with these grand selections meant to satisfy any Cajun appetite: Mini Muffalattas, Mini Crawfish Pies, Chicken Strips, Finger Sandwiches, Chicken & Andouille Jambalaya, Red Beans & Rice, House-Made Bread Pudding and no Mardi Gras celebration would be complete without their long-established King Cakes!

Had enough yet? By no means do we want you to leave the Crescent City in doubt about the Southern tradition of celebration. Friday morning, join us for the parting ceremonial convention trophy presentations and our Special Farewell Champagne Brunch! Delight in a blowout feast of assorted fresh fruit, eggs benedict, shrimp & grits, country fried ribeye steak, Cajun hash browns and creole scramble. And don't forget to stop by the waffle stand and indulge in your choice of assorted toppings. Save room for the chef's homemade beignets to be served fresh and pipin' hot. Each table will be served a couple of bottles of bubbly along with an assorted of fruit juices to combine for a celebratory toast to all the winners. Cheers & Au revoir.....

Bernyce and Jerry



Bernyce & Jerry's.....2018 Convention Monthly Update.....

(5th of an informational series of updates)

New Orleans Tricentennial – Come Join Us!

Celebrating 300 Years in 2018 – We want to invite your involvement.....

2018 marks our 300th Anniversary with a time full of celebrations of our rich history, unique traditions and diverse culture. New Orleans' Tricentennial will be a time to reflect on our past, embrace the wonderful and hospitable city that we have become as well as to participate in our exciting future ahead while attending the **59th Annual NCCC Convention**.

Be sure to visit www.2018nola.com for details and continue to check back with us for everything 2018 has to offer. With events, projects and celebrations galore, the Tricentennial is the ideal year to visit New Orleans.



How Bourbon Street happened.....

THEN: Bourbon Street got its name in 1721, when French engineer Adrien de Pauger first laid out plans for the then-fledgling New Orleans and named its central avenue after France's royal family at the time, the House of Bourbon. It got its reputation, however, two centuries later, when, after the 1917 shuttering of the Storyville vice district, people were forced to look elsewhere to satisfy their appetite for (ahem) entertainment. Then, on Jan. 26, 1926, the grand opening of Maxime's** at 300 Bourbon introduced a new concept to the city: the concept of the nightclub, a glitzier, gender-integrated take on the seedy, male-dominated world of concert saloons that had dominated to that point. The transformation of Bourbon Street into the modern-day adult playground we know today had begun.

How Bourbon Street happened.....con't

NOW: Bourbon Street has gone through a number of transformations over the years, from a largely residential area in the city's first two centuries to what many consider its 1950s and 1960s golden age and continuing through to become the party-all-night playground of today. In the process, it has become known the world over as an epicenter of American vice -- and good times.

**Maxime's was the brainchild of French immigrant Arnaud Cazenave, who in 1918 opened a Bienville Street restaurant named after himself. Arnaud's is still in operation as one of the city's revered old-line restaurants.

After Prohibition, bars and saloons began opening up, clustering around Maxime's. But it was really World War II -- and New Orleans' role as both a port of embarkation for soldiers and sailors, as well as a perfect place for them to blow off steam while on R&R -- that made Bourbon Street a household name across the country.

Maxime's was short-lived. The same year it was opened, it was shut down for Prohibition violations. By 1928, it was known by a new name: Frolics. The building at 300 Bourbon Street that housed Maxime's was torn down in 1966. A hotel was built in its place: the Royal Sonesta. Maxime's wasn't the first nightclub in the city. That distinction is generally credited to The Cave, a club established in the basement of the Grunewald Hotel (now the Roosevelt) and decorated to look like a cavern, complete with faux stalagmites and stalactites.

After Storyville closed but before Maxime's began drawing people to Bourbon Street, the popular place to go for adult entertainment in the city was a cluster of saloons and restaurants in an area along North Rampart Street that became known as "the Tango Belt."

By mid-century, Bourbon Street had become known as a fashionable place to be for partiers and entertainers alike. In addition to its many bars and restaurants, it became home to dancer Chris Owens' self-named club (originally the 809 Club) in 1956, clarinetist Pete Fountain's eponymous club in 1960 and trumpeter Al Hirt's club in 1962.

Bourbon took another step toward its modern incarnation in 1971, when -- under the administration of Mayor Moon Landrieu -- the city introduced the idea of making it a pedestrian mall during nighttime hours.

New Orleans DNA

New Orleans has a complicated relationship with its most famous street. Many locals eschew it as inauthentic and seedy. They also rightfully cringe at the thought that countless visitors define the otherwise culturally rich city by Bourbon's base offerings. (And, be sure, there is a definite dark side to Bourbon, which -- as a 2017 investigation by NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune showed -- has become the epicenter of an illicit and destructive sex trade.) The fact remains, however, that Bourbon Street is a good-time beacon to the world, drawing visitors from across the globe who want to sample a taste of the city's famous debauchery. In the process, those visitors also pump countless millions into the city's economy -- and, when they sober up, many undoubtedly discover that there's much more to New Orleans than Hand Grenades and Hurricanes. So, you can love it, you can hate it, but there's no two ways about: Bourbon Street is an irreplaceable part of New Orleans.

NEXT MONTH: Time to Register for the 59th NCCC Convention!



Things to do in New Orleans

The Aquarium of the Americas

The Aquarium of the Americas, located at the foot of Canal Street on the Mississippi River, is among the five top aquariums in the nation. It showcases the aquatic life of the Americas. Don't miss the 400,000 gallon Gulf of Mexico tank.

HISTORIC Jackson Square

Originally known in the 18th Century as 'Place d'Armes' and later renamed in honor of the Battle of New Orleans hero, Andrew Jackson, Jackson Square is a featured attraction in the heart of the French Quarter in New Orleans. This famous landmark facing the Mississippi River is surrounded by historic buildings including the St. Louis Cathedral, the Presbytere and Cabildo (Louisiana State Museums), and the Pontalba Apartments, the oldest apartment buildings in the U.S.! Jackson Square is a favorite site for visitors from all over the world and for locals as well. The artists, restaurants, museums, merchants and the square itself are one of the French Quarter's most popular destinations.

The Garden District

Hop a St. Charles trolley car to the Garden District and take a step back in time for only \$1.25. Antebellu mansions are abundant here, as are beautifully cultivated flower beds that recall an earlier era. Be sure not to miss a peek at 1239 First Street, home of Anne Rice, the author of the Vampire Lestat and Mayfair Witches novels.

Royal and Magazine Streets

Browse shops filled with art galleries, estate jewelry and fine antiques! The only challenge is figuring out how you're going to get all of this fabulous stuff in the overhead rack on the plane trip home.

Harrah's casino

Harrah's offers 2,000 hot slots and nearly 100 of the most popular table games—all spread out across a 115,000 square-foot gaming floor. Harrah's Casino is located at the foot of Canal Street, next to the French Quarter.

Preservation Hall

It's standing room only but well worth the visit if you want to see one of the places where jazz had its roots. Sorry, no drinking or smoking inside the building. Don't worry if you can't get in, though; the music is loud enough every night that a lot of it will spill into the streets and keep you entertained. Located at 726 St. Peter Street, this popular family-oriented establishment is open from 8 until midnight and has no minimum age requirement.

The Historic Voodoo Museum

There are over 20,000 practitioners of the black arts in the French Quarter. See how they work their magic in a museum dedicated to voodoo dolls, juju bags, love potions and magical powders. Located on Rue Domaine between Bourbon and Royal Streets, this is believed to be the only museum in the world which is dedicated exclusively to the practice of voodoo.

National World War II Museum

Located in the Central Business District of New Orleans, the museum focuses on the contribution made by the United States to victory by the Allies in World War II, and the Battle of Normandy in particular. A variety of artifacts, testimonies and documents, particularly those chronicling the World War II period, are on display.

Café du Monde

One of the things that New Orleans is famous for are the square, powdered sugar doughnuts called “beignets”. This café precursor to Starbucks dates back to the 1860’s and is the perfect spot for an evening cup of chicory coffee and relaxing after a day of sightseeing. Just one cautionary note: don’t wear black. Beignets are melt-in-your-mouth delicious but messy and have a way of leaving their evidence all over one’s clothing. An annex is located just 2 1/2 miles from the NCCC host hotel at 4700 Veterans Memorial Blvd.

Riverwalk MARKETPLACE

The best selection of nationally-known and locally-loved shops like Brookstone, Clarks, Gap, The Body Shop & Crescent City Cooks! Cooking school and the Southern Food & Beverage Museum, the choice is always yours at Riverwalk. As you shop Riverwalk, see the Mighty Mississippi, savor the sweet taste of beignets and tap your feet to the local jazz beat.

Take a Tour via Streetcar!

Enjoy a wonderful ride down the entire length of New Orleans’ celebrated St. Charles Avenue. The St. Charles streetcar delights passengers with breathtaking views of uptown New Orleans as it passes Tulane and Loyola Universities, Audubon Park and impressive mansions. Streetcars in New Orleans offer \$1.25 fares and can be paid with exact change when you board. One, three and 31-day unlimited ride “Jazzy Passes” are also available for \$3, \$9 and \$55 respectively.

Mercedes-Benz Superdome

Often referred to simply as the Superdome, it is a domed sports and exhibition venue primarily serving as the home for the New Orleans Saints, the Sugar Bowl and numerous NFL Super Bowls.

NEXT MONTH: New Orleans Tricentennial – The 300th Anniversary



.....Now – Be Sure You Can Talk the Talk.....



(3rd of an informational series of updates)

New Orleans Lingo

Bayou: Choctaw for “small stream.” It’s a creek with a slow current, flowing from a river or lowland lake, often through swamp areas, usually in a delta region.

Big Easy: “The Big Easy” became the official nickname for New Orleans after a contest was run years ago. Historically, New Orleans has weathered primitive conditions, yellow fever, hurricanes, floods, wars - English, French, Indians, Union -- and just plain hard living. Being a survivor was something to celebrate, and New Orleans is also constantly celebrating! The bottom line is that “The Big Easy” won because it fits! If it’s fun, tastes good, sounds right – then New Orleanians are all for it!

Cajun: Nickname for Acadians, the French-speaking people who migrated to Louisiana from Nova Scotia, starting in 1755.

Cities of the Dead: New Orleans cemeteries. Because of the highwater table, the dead spend their afterlife buried above ground instead of six feet under it.

Creole: (cree’ ole) Descendants of French, Spanish, and Caribbean slaves and natives.

Crescent City: A nickname for New Orleans, originating from the shape of the Mississippi River as it bends around the city.

Directions: There is no West, East, North, or South in New Orleans. You head uptown, downtown, lakeside and riverside. And where ever the music is!

Dixie: Making money in the “Land of Dixie” was a term used by rivermen and merchants--because \$10.00 bank notes were earned, and the French word for ten is Dix.

Dressed: Sandwiches served with lettuce, tomatoes and mayonnaise. “The works”.

Fixin’ to: About to.

Gumbo ya-ya: Everybody talking at once.

Hurricane Party: What locals do after securing their house for a hurricane... throw a party! Get some snacks, drinks, & buddies and hunker down to watch the news give hurricane updates on TV. Hurricane is also the name of a famous New Orleans drink. Be careful; they sneak up on you!

Jazz: Louis Armstrong said, “If you gotta ask, you’ll never know.”

Laissez les bons temps rouler! (less-say lay bon tonh roo-lay): Let the good times roll.

Makin’ groceries: Shopping for groceries. What you do before whipping up some gumbo.

Muffuletta: (Moo Fa’ lotta) And a lotta it is! A super-large, round, fat sandwich filled with salami-type meats, mozzarella cheese, pickles, and olive salad.

N’awlins’: “New Orleans”. It’s faster that way!

Parish: Equivalent of a county in the other 49 states.

Praline: (Praw leen') A brown sugar, pecan-filled, candy patty notorious to New Orleans.

Second Line Parade: The second line parade is a New Orleans tradition that originated at jazz funerals. The "first line" is the family and friends of the deceased as they proceed to the funeral services. The "second line" is after the funeral, typically heralded by the sound of a trumpet leading a brass band in a song celebrating the life of the lost loved one. Paraders wave handkerchiefs in the air as they march behind the band. The second line parade is common for a New Orleans celebration. And that indeed we will have at our very own NCCC Mardi Gras Party, walking and strutting to the sounds of the second line band for all to join in!

Streetcar: New Orleans' name for the world's oldest continuously operating electric street railway. Today, over 20,000 people a day ride to work and play aboard 35 original electric cars, all named to the National Register of Historic Places. You can get to a historic place riding in a historic place. Only in New Orleans.

Voodoo: From voudun, meaning "god," "spirit," or "insight" in the Fon language of Dahomey. Voodoo came from the West African Yoruba religion via Haiti, where African practices mingled with the Catholicism of French colonists.

Yat: A local slang named for the Ninth Ward greeting, "Where y'at?"

NEXT MONTH: Things To Do in New Orleans

October Convention Blast

(2nd of an informational series of updates)

New Orleans' rich and varied culture is evident in its food, music, architecture, and people. It's easy to fall in love with this complex city, whose history is unlike any other in the U.S., and can take a lifetime to truly understand. Good times are a part of the culture, as seen in the city's motto — "Laissez les Bons Temps Rouler," or "Let the Good Times Roll." Let us feed your sense of adventure and thirst for knowledge by providing a variety of scheduled tours just for you.

The Jean Lafitte Swamp Tour is the only swamp tour located in a National Park and Preserve. Experience real-life adventure for the whole family from the comfort of swamp boats. Tour back into privately owned meandering bayous and take a look into the past. View moss draped cypress trees, fascinating plant life and the creatures who make their homes here.

Your Cajun guide is a native of the area who will share with you the legends and lore of Louisiana's still untamed wilderness. Their Coast Guard Certified swamp boats will keep you safe and comfortable and has restroom facilities. Bring your camera and capture wildlife at any time! Alligators, snakes, egrets, white-tailed deer, mink, and nutria all make their home in the Louisiana swamplands.

The New Orleans City Tour is the most highly recommended tour. You'll pass through the streets of the French Quarter and Lakeview (the area most affected by Hurricane Katrina and the devastating levee failures) and wind your way through the streets of the historic Garden District.

In between, you'll travel historic Esplanade Avenue past Creole mansions, where you'll stop for a short cemetery tour at St. Louis #3, home of some of New Orleans most elaborate tombs. All tours are conducted in comfortable, small-group coaches which are not restricted from neighborhood streets like big bus tours. You'll see New Orleans like a local.

Covering nearly 300 years of New Orleans history, culture, architecture and culinary habits, this a must-see tour. You'll walk away not only with a great understanding of this special city, but you'll know where you are and, most-importantly, what to see and do.

Creole Queen Historical River Cruise focuses on the critical Battle of New Orleans, this cruise is offered twice daily and is narrated by a costumed re-enactor who takes guests on a journey through the history of the city as you sail downriver to the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and the historic Chalmette Battlefield. Highlights of the tour include the founding of the city by the LeMoyne brothers, the expansion of the city into the "French Quarters" of the Treme and Marigny, the Louisiana Purchase, and the Battle of New Orleans. A one-hour shore excursion at the battlefield features a guided tour and talk by National Park Rangers.

Additionally, for those that want flexibility and would rather book their own escapade with one of the dozens of other adventurous tours available in the New Orleans area, there will be a Special Tours Concierge representative scheduled during peak convention registration hours.

Bernyce & Jerry

September Convention Blast

(1st of an informational series of updates)

It is with great pride and excitement that we extend a huge **N'Awlins** invitation to one of the top U.S. vacation destinations and the area host for next year's 59th Annual NCCC Convention.

Celebrate with or without your beloved Corvette in a one-of-a-kind Louisiana city on the Mississippi River, nicknamed the "Big Easy." It's known for its round-the-clock nightlife, vibrant live-music scene and spicy, singular cuisine reflecting its history as a melting pot of French, African and American cultures. Beads, Beignets, Blues & Bourbon Street! "Once You Go....You'll Know" You may leave your Heart in San Francisco, and whatever happens in Vegas is likely still there; but, New Orleans will generously give you a little of itself to take forever with you wherever you go!

The 2018 Convention will commence full throttle on Sunday, July 15th and culminate with an elegant Champagne Brunch on Friday, July 20th. In between will feature a full & exciting schedule containing our traditional NCCC competition program events, the most popular area sightseeing bus tours and, of course, some of the most entertaining theme parties from local performers. Convention and event registration will go live on the NCCC convention webpage promptly at 8am CST on Saturday, February 3rd. Specific instructions will be communicated in future mid-month updates, so stay tuned.

Our Host Hotel is The Best Western Plus Landmark Hotel & Suites and is safely and conveniently located in nearby Metairie just off Interstate 10 which is only 7 miles from both the French Quarter to the East and the Louie Armstrong International Airport to the West. And we are thrilled to announce a spectacular daily rate of \$87 for a Double Queen or King Deluxe room (160 available) OR \$119 for a Double Queen or King Kitchenette Suite (95 available). When is the last time you paid under a hundred bucks a night for a room at convention even when you add the current 14.76% tax?

We have contracted the entire host hotel exclusively to ourselves during the busy mid-week periods with hospitality daily in the 16th floor scenic Pontchartrain Suite. Parties and meals will be in the spacious Mardi Gras Ballroom.

Of course since we expect the host hotel to sell out quickly; we have created and are working out the final details of a fair and equitable room reservation procedure. Accordingly, overflow accommodations will also be provided when the Best Western does sell out and they will keep a detailed wait list if cancellations occur. Therefore pay close attention to our mid-month Convention Blasts for the latest up-to-date information.

Remember one thing, we have the hotel entirely booked and under contract so the only way to guarantee your room reservations at the Best Western host hotel will be to follow the procedure we will publish later this year. There are a lot of travel agents and travel websites that will convince you that they can book your rooms with their confirmations; however in all fairness, only rooms reserved directly with the Best Western's local reservation staff will be honored at check-in. Thanks in advance for your understanding in this matter.

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