

African American Heritage Itinerary

Day 1:



Morning

Begin your day at the **Biloxi Visitors Center** and Lighthouse. Explore the museum and learn about African American and other cultural influences in Biloxi and Coastal Mississippi. Across the street, a historic marker describes the turmoil of racial desegregation during the beach Wade-Ins of the 1960s.

Take time to visit the **Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art**. Among the exhibits, don't miss the **Gallery of African American Art**, which features photography, sculpture and other art media created by African American artists.

Walk through the replica of the **Pleasant Reed House**. Home of the late Pleasant Reed, the first free black man in Biloxi to build and own his home outright after the Civil War. This historic "side-hall camelback shotgun" from the early 1900s will take you back in time as soon as you enter its doors.

Travel to the city of Gulfport for a lovely view of Bayou Bernard, one of the Gulf Coast's bayous named after a free black man, Bernard Beniot.

Beniot operated as a blacksmith and forge on the banks of this bayou.

Lunch

For lunch, enjoy a delicious meal at **Blow Fly Inn** while enjoying a wonderful and relaxing view of Bayou Bernard.



Afternoon

Consider a relaxing cruise to **Ship Island** to visit Fort Massachusetts. During the Civil War, Ship Island was maintained by the **Second Regiment Louisiana Infantry Native Guards**, the first black regiment organized during the war.

Day 2:



Morning

Begin your trip with a spiritually unique tour of **St. Augustine Catholic Church and Seminary**, the first seminary in the United States created specifically to train African American men for the priesthood. St. Augustine is the oldest existing Catholic seminary in Mississippi, established in 1922.

Explore the fascinating **Marian & Agony Grotto** adjacent to St. Augustine Catholic Church. View the sculptures inside the grotto that depicts the agony Jesus Christ went through before the Crucifixion. The grotto and the statues inside were designed and built by **Thaddeaus S. Bourcree**, an African American bricklayer.



Lunch

Satisfy your taste buds with fresh Gulf Seafood at **Cuz's Old Town Oyster Bar & Grill** located in downtown Bay St. Louis. Specializing in crawfish, shrimp, crabs, oysters on the half shell, overstuffed po'boys and slow cooked prime roast.



Afternoon

Discover the **100 Men Hall**, as it became an energy center for Black life along the Coast, hosting music and any life event that happened in the African American community from baby showers to funerals. The Hall is one of the rare physical sites still standing on the *Mississippi Blues Trail*, and is a testament to the rich birthing of American music that unfolded during a history of racial oppression. It is one of the few significant African American landmarks in Mississippi.