

TOURISM WORKS

for SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

LAKE CHARLES/SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU (LC/SWLA CVB)

▶ VISITLAKECHARLES.ORG



TOURISM 101

The staff members at the LC/SWLA CVB are passionate about Southwest Louisiana. They work diligently to showcase the best of what Southwest Louisiana has to offer visitors, groups and media professionals. Hospitality and customer service are at the core of every experience. Read on to learn about the tourism industry, the mission of the bureau and the latest on what is happening in the world of tourism in Southwest Louisiana!

1. WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The official name is the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau; however, online and through social media, the CVB is better known as VisitLakeCharles.

2. WHAT IS THE MISSION?

The mission of the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau is to provide

leadership in initiating and coordinating the worldwide marketing of Calcasieu Parish as a highly desirable leisure and convention destination; to solicit and service convention and other group-related business; and to engage in visitor promotions which generate overnight stays in Southwest Louisiana, thereby enhancing and developing the economic fabric of the parish.

3. WHO DOES THE CVB REPRESENT?

The LC/SWLA CVB represents Calcasieu Parish and its six cities: Lake Charles, Sulphur, Westlake, Vinton, DeQuincy and Iowa.

4. HOW DOES THE CVB ATTRACT GROUP BUSINESS?

The LC/SWLA CVB's sales team actively pursues conventions, sporting events, tour groups and other group business by bidding on events and offering services and information on

accommodations and venues to attract visitors to Southwest Louisiana.

5. HOW DOES THE CVB ATTRACT MEDIA COVERAGE?

In addition to promotions, the bureau's communications department also works to bring media professionals to Southwest Louisiana to spread the word in publications, blogs, broadcast and other media. The LC/SWLA CVB enhances the local economy through enticing people outside the area to stay, play and eat in Southwest Louisiana.

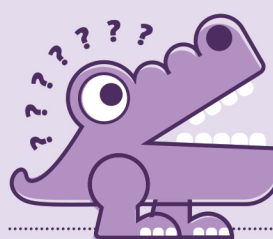
6. WHERE IS THE CVB ONLINE?

Go to VisitLakeCharles.org. There, you can find great ideas on things to do and the events calendar. You can also find links to social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube and the CVB's blog. Follow #VisitLakeCharles

WHERE IS THE CVB LOCATED?

Stop by for a Cup of Coffee!

The LC/SWLA CVB has two office locations, one at 1205 N. Lakeshore Drive in Lake Charles and one located at 2740 Ruth St. in Sulphur at Creole Nature Trail Adventure Point. Both offices are open 7 days a week. Come by and visit with the friendly staff and learn about places to visit and things to do in Southwest Louisiana and statewide!



GATOR BITES: DID YOU KNOW?

Arts & Crabs was started by the LC/SWLA CVB

Local festival, Arts & Crabs, was first called "The Arts & Crabs Experience," and it was held in 2010. The concept for the festival was sparked by the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana Convention & Visitors Bureau to promote the crab as an iconic seafood of Southwest Louisiana and nature's bounty found along the Creole Nature Trail All-American Road. The bureau reached out to the Arts & Humanities Council of Southwest Louisiana to create the inaugural event. The 2018 Arts & Crabs Fest will be held on August 18; learn more at www.VisitLakeCharles.org.



Lake City Entertainment

THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

From the Desk of
Shelley Johnson, CDME,
LCTP, Executive Director

The summer season has been action-packed with many events, tournaments and projects that have brought economic impact to Southwest Louisiana with the staff of the LC/SWLA CVB working around the clock to ensure the promotion and success of group business in the area.

The Louisiana Rural Water Association (LRWA) Annual Conference was held in Southwest Louisiana in mid-July. The conference consisted of more than 150 exhibit booths, 290 vendors and more than 1,000 people registered, and Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards was the keynote speaker.



Following the LRWA, the area hosted the Louisiana Municipal Association, which advocates for 303 municipalities and 2 parishes to strengthen community development. Approximately 1,500 people experienced the hospitality of Southwest Louisiana, with the staff of the LC/SWLA CVB working with the City of Lake Charles.

Next week, August 21-23, is the Louisiana Lt. Governor's Travel Summit which will be held in Lake Charles at the Golden Nugget, organized by the Louisiana Travel Association (LTA) and the LC/SWLA CVB. More than 500 attendees will



experience local culture, musicians and cuisine. Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser will be the keynote speaker, and the staff of the Louisiana Office of Tourism, Louisiana travel professionals, and international representatives will attend. LTA supports the hospitality industry with promotional opportunities in addition to leadership and marketing initiatives.



Shelley Johnson, CDME, LCTP
Executive Director



HOW IS THE LC/SWLA CVB FUNDED?

The LC/SWLA CVB is solely funded by a 4% occupancy tax, paid by visitors to the area staying in local accommodations. There is an additional 1% tax that is collected by the CVB with 95% dispersed back to the municipality from which the revenue was collected to fund programs that will

improve visitation, tourism, economic development or infrastructure. The remaining 5% will be dedicated to the Project Enhancement Grant that is available to nonprofit or governmental agencies in Calcasieu Parish with projects that enhance visitation or the visitor experience.

Top 20 Local Restaurants in SWLA



The LC/SWLA CVB held the sixth annual Top 20 Restaurants online contest in honor of culinary arts and foodies who love to travel. Individuals could nominate and vote for their favorite places to eat in Calcasieu Parish. Culinary delights are a major draw for tourism, and people are passionate about food.

Congratulations to this year's Top 3 Restaurants!

1. LUNA BAR & GRILL
lunabarandgrill.com
2. STEAMBOAT BILL'S
steamboatbills.com
3. DARRELL'S
darrellspoboy.com



See the complete list at
VisitLakeCharles.org/Top20.



TOURISM BY THE NUMBERS

Visitor travel expenditures in Calcasieu Parish exceeded **\$732 million** in 2017, ranking 4th in the state of 64 parishes.



Southwest Louisiana employed over **11,000** people in the tourism industry in 2017, an increase of 3%.

4TH IN THE STATE



RECOGNITION

In 2017, the U.S. Tourism Quality Index ranked Lake Charles as #2 in the entire nation for the "experiential quality" for small destinations using information from Trip Advisor, Yelp or social media sites. The LC/SWLA was honored with the *Convention South's* annual readers' choice award for the second consecutive year.