

A DAY IN ST. MARTINVILLE

Visit the St. Martinville Cultural Heritage Museum or Acadian Memorial, New Market Street, St. Martinville, for a friendly welcome, brochures, historical information on the city, and a downtown map. Group tours are available for 20 people or more. Visit www.stmartinville.org or call 337-394-2233 for more information.

At the corner of New Market Street and Evangeline Boulevard along the Bayou Teche is the ancient Evangeline Oak, made famous the Longfellow's poem, "Evangeline", based on a woman called Emmeline who arrived here from Nova Scotia. Legend has it that it was here, too, that she learned of her lover's betrothal to another.



To the left of the Evangeline Oak Tree, is the St. Martinville Cultural Heritage Center, which houses the African American Museum and the Museum of the Acadian Memorial. The museums illustrate the uprooting of people who helped found Louisiana. It is also home to the Heritage Acadian Odyssey Quilt.

To the left of the Cultural Heritage Center is the Acadian Memorial. The memorial honors the 3,000 Acadian exiles who found refuge in Louisiana. View the 30-foot mural, "The Arrival of the Acadians in Louisiana", depicting their arrival after expulsion from Nova Scotia. View the Wall of Names, which lists approximately 3000 people identified as Acadian refugees in early Louisiana records. The courtyard in the back of the memorial houses the Eternal Flame, which symbolizes the ability of a culture to rekindle itself despite great hardship, and the Deportation Cross, the first of several international sites to erect a replica of the Grand-Pre' Deportation Cross in Nova Scotia



Enjoy the beauty and history of this historical town square. Visit the. Martin de Tours Catholic Church, the Mother Church of the Acadians. Established in 1765, it is one of the oldest Catholic Churches in Louisiana. The present-day church was erected in 1844. Guided tours are available. Learn the history behind Longfellow's epic poem Evangeline. The Evangeline Monument, on Main Street, is a statue to the side and slightly to the rear of St. Martin's Church. The production company that came here to film the movie epic donated the statue to the town in 1929. The star of that movie, Dolores del Rio, supposedly posed for the statue. This also reportedly marks the spot of the grave of real-life Evangeline, Emmeline Labiche.



Also on the banks of Bayou Teche, just north of St. Martinville on Louisiana Highway 31, is the Longfellow-Evangeline State Commemorative Area. The Olivier Plantation House on the grounds is typical of larger Acadian homes, with bricks made by hand and baked in the sun, a cypress frame and pegs (instead of nails), and bousillage construction on the upper floor. You can also see the cuisine (outdoor kitchen) and magazine (storehouse) out back. Visitors can also tour the Visitors Center, which contains displays on the history, culture, and lifestyles of both the Acadian and Creole people of the area and learn how different the lives of the Acadians and Creoles were. An Acadian Cabin, small and rustic, is furnished with original "Louisiana Cypress" furniture. Along the banks of Bayou Teche, visitors will find the Acadian Farmstead, an example of how a single-family home would have appeared in the early 19th century. The site includes the family home with an outdoor kitchen, slave quarters, and a barn.



St. Martinville has many family-owned restaurants for your dining pleasure, along with many fine gift shops.