

'TIS THE SEASON FOR LIVING

CRAWFISH Y'ALL | BIKE THE TRACE | DANCE LIKE A CAJUN

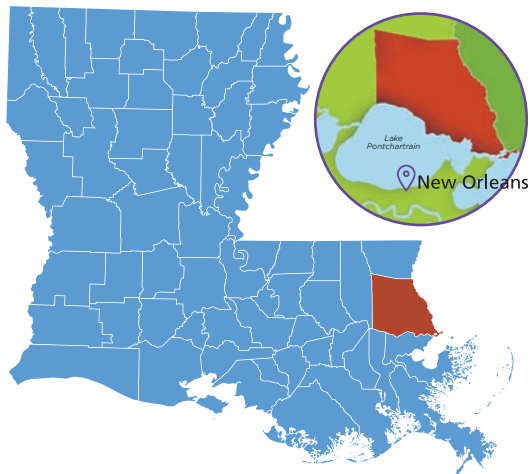


Explore

THE NORTHSHORE



Spring/Summer 2019



LEGEND	
	Interstate
	Secondary Road
	Parks & Wildlife Refuges
	Recreational Trail
	Tourist Information

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FROM THE EDITOR

Ready for summer?

Northshore winters are mild by most standards, but there's nothing like blue skies and warm sun to stimulate our appetites for fun. Festivals and fresh-air concerts pop up each spring like the clover in our garden. And summer, well, summer is magical, with long days spent soaking in sunlight and warm nights filled with the fragrance of night-blooming jasmine and a soundtrack of harmonizing crickets under a starry sky.

When you reflect on your childhood, doesn't summer star in your sweetest memories? Swinging on a rope from tree-lined river banks, splashing in a pool with other happy kids, even playing in the spray of a hose held by your dad. Summer's wet and wild and sweet here on the Northshore, where kids can be kids and their parents can, too.

There are 80,000 acres of wilderness preserve here in St. Tammany Parish. That's pretty cool, right? Lots of green space, great for hiking and exploring, for seeing wildlife in its native habitat. The Tammany Trace bike and hike trail winds through the Northshore for 31 miles. But when it's too hot to bike or to hike, the waterways await. Bayous and shallow, sandy-bottom rivers. Miles of shoreline along Lake Pontchartrain and sweet little sandy beaches in Slidell and Mandeville.



You can rent a paddleboard for a stand-up glide on the Tchefuncte. Grab some friends and your sunscreen and head for the Bogue Chitto for a day spent tubing on the river. Take a sunset kayak tour down Cane Bayou to the lake, arriving just in time to see the sky turn glorious lavender and pink and orange.

We won't even mention how good the fishing is here. And few things are more fun than hauling in nets full of crabs along Lake Road or even from your own little dock at your over-water cabin at Fontainebleau State Park. (The cabins are quintessential summer!)

There are grown-up pursuits here — great dining, galleries and cute boutiques, for example — but summer on the Northshore really is all about relaxing into your natural self, dressing for adventure (or for comfort) and making memories. So pack your shades and your sense of adventure and unleash your inner child. You know the one, the kid who liked feeling sand squish between her toes and thought life would always be that sweet.

Renée Kientz

A handwritten signature of Renée Kientz in black ink.

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Explore THE NORTHSHORE

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[ExploreLouisianaNorthshore](https://www.facebook.com/ExploreLouisianaNorthshore)
and on Instagram @lanorthshore

The Bogue Falaya
River beckons when
the weather gets warm.



JOIN THE PARTY

There's always something fun
happening on the Northshore,
from festivals and street parties
to crawfish cook-offs and
Mardi Gras.



Party under the stars at
Pontchartrain Vineyards'
Jazz'n the Vines.



The Northshore planner

Head to LOUISIANANORTHSHORE.COM/EVENTS to find out more

APRIL 10-14

A Taste of Covington

Wine dinners and culinary events

APRIL 12

Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra

Beethoven with Julian Steckel

APRIL 13

Easter at the Market

Hopping good time in Mandeville

APRIL 27

St. Tammany Collectors Convention

Toy and comic con

MAY 24

Columbia Street Block Party

Music, vintage cars and more

JUNE 29

Light up the Lake

Independence Day fireworks and music

JULY 18

Lobby Lounge Concert

Kristin Diable plays the Harbor Center

SEPT. 14-15

St. Tammany Crab Festival

Crabs, crabs, crabs ... and music

OCT. 3-6

St. Tammany Parish Fair

Rides, critters and carnival food

Check out the Events calendar at LOUISIANANORTHSHORE.COM

We take full advantage of the warm weather months here in St. Tammany Parish, planning scores of events that celebrate the season. Street parties, art walks, free concerts, food festivals, fireworks on the lakefront, White Linen nights ... From one end of the parish to the other, there's always something to do and most of it's free.



Swell on wheels

Abita's open-to-all Bicycle Festival gets the fun rolling with art bikes, a collectors' swap meet and parade through town

Each year since 2000, the Louisiana Bicycle Festival in Abita Springs has celebrated pedal power and the creative spirit on the day before Father's Day. The fest, which this year falls on June 15, features a swap meet, vintage and art bikes, and a short parade/ride.

The swap meet starts early, around 8 a.m., with bike enthusiasts talking and trading parts, stories and ideas in the open field across from Abita Town Hall. Bikes of every description, some old, some very inventive, can be seen at the festival and on the streets. The not-quite-impromptu parade/ride around town begins at noon and

everyone is invited to join in.

There is no admission charge for spectators or participants. It's a fun day on wheels for kids of all ages.

Food is available on the festival grounds across from Town Hall and at nearby restaurants including the Abita Brew Pub, Abita Springs Café, Artigue's and Mama D's Pizza. Don't forget to check out the Abita Mystery House (see Pg. 33), the fun and wacky roadside attraction that created the event. The Mystery House is adjacent to the 31-mile Tammany Trace bike path that winds through the heart of Abita. 🦋



New fest!

COME TO COVINGTON, THERE'S A NEW fest in town: the Bluesberry Festival makes its debut June 8 at Bogue Falaya Park. Showcasing blues with a little jazz and rock thrown in, the all-day fest also features the Abita Beer Garden, live art demos, a food truck roundup and children's activity village.

Among announced artists are Tyler Kinchen, Charmaine Neville, Eric Johanson, Crispin Schroeder and Casey James, a Texas-based singer/songwriter familiar to many as a finalist on Season 9 of *American Idol*.

Tickets are sold in advance and at the gate. The fest runs 10 a.m. till 7 p.m. at the lovely little park in downtown Covington along the banks of the Bogue Falaya River. 🦋





Buskers take the stage

Each spring, this spirited little festival brings street musicians, artists and food vendors together for full day of fun

The Busker Festival is a full day of fun and eclectic music when some of the New Orleans area's best street performers (a.k.a. "buskers") come play on a real stage in Abita Springs Trailhead Park. There's no admission charge and there's plenty of free parking. Lawn chairs and wonky dance moves allowed.

Sponsored by the Abita Springs Opry and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation, the 2019 Busker Festival will be held from 11:30 a.m. till 7 p.m. on March 24. The event is held concurrently with the Abita Springs Art and Farmers Market so there are food and craft vendors in the park, too. 🐞

Look! Birds!

EIGHT SPECIES OF WOODPECKER CALL the Northshore home, including the elusive red-cockaded, but those are just a few of the many birds would-be watchers look for during the Great Louisiana Bird-Fest. St. Tammany Parish is considered a flyway and each spring, seasonal visitors such as the scarlet tanager, indigo bunting, ruby-throated hummingbirds and numerous waterfowl drop in on residents like the great blue herons, great egrets, white ibis, raptors and others.

Northlake Nature Center, a 400-acre nature preserve in Mandeville, hosts the Bird Fest, which is April 5-8, 2019. Register in advance for excursions and classes. 🐞



Don't miss...

LOUISIANA VETERANS FESTIVAL

Hosted by the East St. Tammany Habitat for Humanity, this is an all-day tribute for all veterans and includes live music by bands like the Top Cats. May 18 in Slidell's Heritage Park. Admission free for vets.

WHITE LINEN NIGHTS

Covington and Slidell both host White Linen Nights celebrating art and culture. Slidell goes first with its event Aug. 10 in Olde Towne. Covington's White Linen Night is the following week on Aug. 17 in its historic downtown. Free admission.

KOKOMO STROLL

Break out the flip flops and Hawaiian shirts for this summer celebration in the streets of downtown Covington and listen to some Don Ho-esque live music. Free admission but \$20 gets you a Kokomo Stroll cup that gets filled up with "boat drinks" at stops along Columbia Street. 5-9 p.m. June 22.

MANDEVILLE LIVE!

Bring lawn chairs and dancing shoes to this free concert series held at Mandeville's Trailhead Amphitheater on Fridays in April.

A TASTE OF COVINGTON

Culinary events include wine tastings, dinner pairings at participating restaurants and venues. ATOC happens April 10-14. Prices vary.

SOME ENCHANTED EVENING WITH THE LPO

The Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra plays a free concert in Slidell's Heritage Park (Slidell Auditorium in case of rain) on May 5. Enjoy great music out under the stars.

GIROD STREET STROLL

Saunter down Old Mandeville's Girod Street and enjoy mint juleps and tasting plates from local chefs. Live music, art and demos. To participate purchase your mint julep cup in advance from area businesses. 5-9p.m. April 27.



Hear history live at the Dew

Music brings a vibrant past to life at Old Mandeville's world-famous 1895 jazz hall

The unpainted cypress structure doesn't look like much from the street, just a raised building with few windows, a pitched roof and an easily missed marker out front. But the tiny Dew Drop Jazz Hall looms large for aficionados looking to understand the history of jazz. Area musicians say gigs there feel special, maybe even spiritual, and a devoted clutch of German jazz musicians makes the journey every couple of years just to play on the rustic stage of what is believed to be the world's oldest rural jazz hall.

The Dew Drop Social and Benevolent Hall was opened in what is now Old Mandeville in 1895 by a group of civic-minded African-American residents as a venue for raising funds for needy individuals in the community. Located on the 400 block of Lamarque, just blocks from the Mandeville lakefront, the Dew Drop looks much as it did more than a century ago when musicians playing a new type of music called jazz took steamboats across the lake from New Orleans to play at the hall. Among them were early greats Bud-dy Petit and Kid Ory; later a young Louis Armstrong (whose family lived nearby) played there.

The Dew Drop is still hosting fine regional musicians on its stage, brought in by the Friends of the Dew Drop organization, which presents fall and spring concert series there. The audience arrives early for prized seating on benches inside the little building, while others set up lawn chairs outside under large oaks and enjoy the music spilling out old windows, shutters opened wide. Purchase a glass of wine or an Abita Beer from a table out front, or a dinner plate from one of the church ladies at First Free Mission Baptist next door.

There's more than music in the air at the Dew Drop. There's magic. 🕸

Come see for yourself or check out Max Cusimano's video of a live performance at www.louisiananorthshore.com/dewdrop



Up next at the Dew Drop

MARCH 23

Helen Gillet & Wazozo

APRIL 6

Walter "Wolfman" Washington & the Roadmasters

APRIL 20

New Orleans Cottonmouth Kings

MAY 11

Lost Bayou Ramblers

MAY 25

NOLA String Kings
(John Rankin, Don Vappie and Matt Rhody)





Roots music in all its glory

Abita Springs' Opry celebrates diverse music heritage of Louisiana in popular biannual concert series

The Abita Springs Opry has celebrated the best of Louisiana roots music with its spring (and fall) seasons of multi-performer shows playing bluegrass, country, gospel, jazz, blues, Zydeco and Cajun music, often on the same bill. The public can gather to hear impromptu music sessions on the Town Hall front porch before taking a seat inside for the Opry performances.

Arrive early as shows often sell out and seating is first come, first served. Tickets are \$20. Spring 2019 Opry shows will be

March 16, April 20 and May 18. Though the lineup hadn't been announced at press time, past performers have included talented acts like the Zion Harmonizers, Cottonmouth Kings, Meschia Lake and Slick Skillet Serenaders jug band.

Abita's Town Hall is a great venue, an intimate space seating fewer than 400 people. More than a century old, it features wood floors and pecky cypress walls that make acoustic magic when the music starts. 🕷



Learn Cajun

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE CAJUN TO "PASS a good time" on the dance floor when the Northshore Cajun Dancers convene at Abita Springs' Town Hall each month. Everyone is welcome to join in. Don't know how to Cajun dance but want to learn? Free lessons are given from 7-7:30 p.m. Live music from the likes of Bruce Daigrepoint, Choupique and Lee Benoit commence at 8 p.m. (\$11 cover charge). It's a classically Cajun evening of joie de vivre, food and drink, with all ages and skill levels two-stepping across the floor.



‘Painting gives me so much joy’

Christina Pappion blends art, family and sense of place in her feel-good, sun-filled Old Mandeville gallery **BY MEGHAN HOLMES**

Christina Pappion’s disposition is as sunny and welcoming as her Old Mandeville gallery, a space filled with paintings of New Orleans icons, handcrafted objects and the sound of jazz. Pappion has made a name for herself as an artist for two unique talents: painting live events and custom-painting athletes’ shoes.

A New Orleans native, the artist moved to the Northshore almost four years ago and opened Pappion Gallery, showcasing her vivid and color-saturated paintings as well as gifts and accessories she personally curates. The artist also hosts events like painting classes and private parties in the space, encouraging people to gather. “I love that the Northshore is a tight-knit community, and that family is important,” Pappion says.

“I love that the Northshore is a tight-knit community, and that family is important.”

The artist and her husband have two daughters, ages 5 and 8, who love spending time in the gallery. While she works on commissions, which comprise about two-thirds of her work, her daughters like to paint, too. “They’re always trying to paint on something,” she says. “They also like to run through the gallery like bulls in a china shop, and I just hope things don’t fall.”

Since opening her gallery, Pappion’s career has flourished. She received publicity for her paintings of weddings and other events and became the first woman of color hired to create the annual Crescent City Classic poster in 2017. She also started selling her art at Jazz Fest and designed 24 custom pairs of cleats for the New Orleans Saints as part of the NFL’s My Cause, My Cleats initiative, in which players showcase causes that are important to them with uniquely painted cleats.

“I actually attribute a lot of my success to the New Orleans Saints and being hired to do the cleats,” she says. “The entire team gives my family so much joy. Painting also gives me so much joy. I feel so blessed to be able to do this, and so happy. I’ve painted on glass, canvas, and wood, and now I’ve painted on shoes, too. I can’t wait to see what happens next.” PAPPION GALLERY IS AT 413 GIROD ST., MANDEVILLE. 🐛



FIVE SPOTS

SALADINO GALLERY

Regional gallery showcasing works by respected Southern artists.
409 E. BOSTON ST., COVINGTON

PINEAPPLE GALLERY

Fine original works by local and regional artists.
829 ASBURY DRIVE, MANDEVILLE

CITY OF SLIDELL CULTURAL CENTER

City Hall gallery hosts multi-artist shows and exhibitions.
2055 SECOND ST., SLIDELL

RUTLAND STREET GALLERY

Paintings and fine crafts, jewelry and more by local artists.
828 E. RUTLAND ST., COVINGTON

SAMBOLA GALLERY

Featuring works of Adam Sambola, inspired by Louisiana culture.
1808 FRONT ST., SLIDELL

Visually striking

Fine local art is beautifully front and center at established St. Tammany Art Association

The St. Tammany Art Association has been an important part of the Northshore's cultural scene since 1958. Housed in a 19th-century structure, STAA features two galleries in which to showcase a variety of art, one for visiting exhibits, the other for members' works. The nonprofit organization's mission is to showcase emerging and established artists. It also offers classes for all ages.

The STAA is the hub of Covington's visual arts scene, a scene which includes numerous respected galleries in the historic

district within blocks of the STAA building. Six times a year, the STAA also hosts the Covington Art Market in the space dubbed Art Alley just outside its walls. Juried works are offered for sale in the festive scene held on first Saturdays in Spring and Fall (October, November, December, March, April, May). In addition, it's often at the center of interest for visitors strolling Columbia Street during the town's Fall for Art and Spring for Art events and other street parties. STAA, 320 N. COLUMBIA, COVINGTON, (985) 892-8650 🐞



PHOTO: RENEE KIENTZ

Go for the old

Antiques shopping is super in historic districts, and at street fairs showcasing everything vintage

Antique shopping is a year-round pursuit on the Northshore but the treasure hunt intensifies in the spring with two street fairs focused on all things antique and vintage.

On the east side of the parish, check out the Olde Towne Slidell Antique Street Fair, a two-day shop-fest with more than 200 dealers selling furniture, glassware, ephemera, art, vintage jewelry, toys, clothing and collectibles. The dealers sprawl across several blocks of the city's Olde Towne historic district. There's no admission charge. Parking is also free. There's a

food area and live music for when you need a break.

Slidell hosts Street Fairs in the Spring and Fall. Dates for 2019 are Saturday and Sunday, March 30-31 and Oct. 26-27.

The City of Covington, to the west, is home to the Antiques and Uniques Festival each spring. This year's event will be Saturday and Sunday, April 27-28 in that city's historic district. In addition to dealers offering antiques, vintage items and architectural salvage, there are walking tours, classic cars and food vendors. Free admission and parking. 🕷

FIVE SPOTS

GIROD STREET

Scavenge for vintage bounty near the lakefront.
OLD MANDEVILLE

PAINTED PELICAN

Fun antiques co-op open every Friday-Sunday.
1957 N. COLLINS, COVINGTON

LEE LANE

Quaint cottages house charming antiques shops.
DOWNTOWN COVINGTON

CLAYTON HOUSE ANTIQUES

Multi-dealer co-op offers antiques and accessories.
1600 N. COLLINS, COVINGTON

OLDE TOWN SLIDELL

Historic district home to several antiques shops.
FIRST AND ERLANGER STREETS

NORTHSHORE INDULGE

Liz's Where
Y'at Diner

PHOTO: DAVID GALLET

TAKE A BITE

Life's a feast on the Northshore, where the culinary perspective has been shaped by the area's diverse cultures as well as the bounty of the bayou. Whether you choose poboys from a mom-and-pop shop or Gulf-inspired fare from talented chefs, there's a great meal waiting for you.



PHOTO ERIN AMADEO, COURTESY OF FATTY'S SEAFOOD

The spice of life

Around these parts, happiness is measured by the pound during crawfish season. Get ready to partake!

Family life and social life in Louisiana both revolve around food and nothing illustrates that better than crawfish season. Arrivals of the year's first sacks of crawfish usually merit an announcement on the evening news, kicking off a feeding frenzy that lasts for months. Though the season can vary a little, supplies are most plentiful and most reliable from January to June.

At peak season, around April, Louisianans celebrate spring with huge crawfish boils, cooking up 30- and 40-pound sacks of the crustaceans in cauldrons of spiced-up boiling water. There's almost always crab boil (usually Zatarain's) involved, and cayenne pepper. And salt, and lemons. Different cooks favor varied additions – corn on the cob, potatoes, mushrooms, whole garlic pods and sausage

among them. The crawfish et al often are dumped, steaming, onto a tall table that has been lined with newspaper and family and friends gather around, standing, to feast, drink, laugh and repeat.

Visitors sometimes are invited to these convivial crawfish boils (or are lucky enough to take part in one at Lacombe's Bayou Adventure, which sometimes hosts them for visiting groups like Habitat for Humanity). But seafood markets and restaurants get in on the action, too, selling hot boiled crawfish by the pound. (Expect to eat, on average, 3-to-5 pounds each!) Crawfish aren't just served boiled. You'll find them in iconic Louisiana dishes like crawfish etouffee or silky bisque, thrown into fettuccine and other pasta dishes, battered and fried. 🦞



HOW TO EAT A CRAWFISH

Hold the head with one hand, grab the tail with the other, grasping it high, close to where the two meet. Gently twist the tail and pull. The two will separate. If you're feeling brave, suck the head for spicy juices before setting it aside. Holding the tail, peel away the first couple of rings of shell, then pinch the tail at the bottom. Slide the meat out and pop into your mouth.



PHOTO: DAVID GALLENT

Crawfish fun

THE NORTHSHORE HOSTS SEVERAL crawfish festivals each year. The biggest of those – maybe the biggest anywhere – is Slidell’s Crawfish Cook-off, a fundraiser hosted by the Hospice Foundation of the South each April at the peak of crawfish season. (It’s April 27 for 2019.)

The event features 60 teams competing for honors and the title of “Best Crawfish in St. Tammany Parish.” By festival’s end, those teams of master boilers will have cooked up 45,000 pounds of crawfish. That’s more than 22 tons of the little lobster lookalikes, all spicy and so delicious. Best part is, the price of admission gets you all the crawfish you can eat, live music and a fun day under the Louisiana sun.



FIVE SPOTS

FATTY’S SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

Boiled and fried seafood and crawfish etouffee, too.

1300 GAUSE BLVD., SLIDELL

MANDEVILLE SEAFOOD MARKET

Take home or eat there at the popular market and restaurant.

2020 LA HWY 59, MANDEVILLE

KENNEY SEAFOOD

Boiled crawfish is among the Northshore’s best.

400 PONTCHARTRAIN DRIVE,
SLIDELL

COVINGTON STREET SEAFOOD

Crawfish, poboys and more at this market and eatery.

1123 COLUMBIA ST., COVINGTON

CRABBY SHACK RESTAURANT

It’s always hopping when the crawfish pot is going.

305 LA HWY 21, MADISONVILLE

Bon appétit, bon temps

The Northshore's diverse and deep restaurant scene feeds your hunger for authentic culinary experiences



DEL PORTO RISTORANTE

501 E. BOSTON, COVINGTON

Included in New Orleans food critic's list of top 10 restaurants in the New Orleans area, Del Porto is a local favorite for its emphasis on locally sourced ingredients and contemporary Italian fare. Husband-wife chef team David and Torre Solazzo are three-time semifinalists for the James Beard Foundation's Best Chef South award. One bite of their stellar crudo, one spoon of risotto, and you know why.



CAJUN MIKE'S KITCHEN

64579 LA 3081, PEARL RIVER

Owner Mike King summons up his Cajun heritage with Cajun specialties like alligator sauce piquante and boudin balls, as well as crawfish pie, jambalaya and file gumbo (order the Hank Williams Bowl). All-you-can-eat fried catfish is popular, too.



ANNADELE'S PLANTATION

71518 CHESTNUT ST, COVINGTON

Originally built in 1834 and now a B&B and event venue, Annadele's is also known for its namesake restaurant headed by chef Ronald Bonnette. Classic Creole and French-inspired fare like savory smoked shrimp cheesecake and seafood au gratin.



HAMBONE

544 GIROD ST., MANDEVILLE

Chef Luke Hidalgo takes an upscale approach to Gulf South comfort foods, taking them to new heights. Think fried boudin with crab boil mozzarella, decadent charbroiled oysters, a rockin' gumbo ... all served in a cute-as-can-be cottage.

DAKOTA

629 N. HIGHWAY 190, COVINGTON

Chef Kim Kringlie still helms this grand dame of fine dining in Covington. Kringlie's signature crabmeat and Brie soup earns new fans daily and his take on contemporary Louisiana flavors produce stunners like crispy soft shell crab stuffed with shrimp and crawfish, served on pecan rice, and honey-glazed duck confit.



OXLOT 9

428 E. BOSTON, COVINGTON

Chef Jeffrey Hansell's lovely dining space in downtown Covington's Southern Hotel is a great showcase for the Gulf-inspired contemporary Southern food. Killer fried frog legs in hot sauce butter. Venison meat pies. Heritage pork chops. Hansell's creativity and his deft touch with seafood and with meat make his ever-changing menu a culinary adventure.



WATERSTREET BISTRO

804 WATER ST., MADISONVILLE

This locals favorite for weekend brunch or good Louisiana-inspired food any time comes with a view of the Tchefuncte River. The vibe is relaxed. WaterStreet is a great spot to enjoy dishes like blue crab claws in chardonnay butter sauce, grilled redfish, veal and pasta dishes.

LOLA

517 N. NEW HAMPSHIRE, COVINGTON

Talented husband-wife chef team Keith and Nealy Frentz operate this dining room in Covington's old train depot. The pair met when both were chefs at world-famous Brennan's in New Orleans. House-made everything pleases LOLA's lunch crowds with blue plate specials, great salads and desserts. Dinner is more upscale but fresh, smart, and creative — and especially fun in LOLA's darling vintage dining car.



PALMETTOS ON THE BAYOU

1901 BAYOU LANE, SLIDELL

The name describes the place, a large Acadian cabin on the banks of historic Bayou Bonfouca, lush with palmettos and iconic Louisiana greenery enjoyed from the decks. Enjoy gumbo, shrimp and grits, crawfish beignets, trout amandine, balsamic duck and on Sundays, a live jazz brunch.



GALLAGHER'S

LOCATIONS IN COVINGTON,
MANDEVILLE AND SLIDELL

Longtime local favorite chef Pat Gallagher knows his way around a steak. You may never have a better filet served in sizzling butter. Expect divine crab cakes and a deft touch with Louisiana seafood like pompano and redfish, as well as Colorado rack of lamb and chargrilled quail.



SAL & JUDY'S

27491 HIGHWAY 190, LACOMBE

Sal Impastato still helms the kitchen at this Lacombe institution where Italy meets Louisiana. There's pasta, like veal cannelloni and lasagna, even Broccolini and Cappelletti (pasta stuffed with chicken and mortadella). But also trout Meuniere and crabmeat au gratin.

You'll eat our words

Confused by some of the items on the menu?
Here's a Louisiana lexicon to interpret for you

One glance at a menu and you know you're in Louisiana, even if you aren't familiar with the dishes. Here's a brief primer to help you decipher local menus.

ANDOUILLE: This flavorful, spicy sausage is a favorite in chicken and sausage gumbo. (Pron. AHN-doo-ee)

BBQ SHRIMP: Not what you think. It means shrimp left in the shell and served almost submerged in a garlicky, peppery butter sauce. Crisp French bread helps you lap up the butter. It's messy. It's fattening. It's okay; live a little.

BOUDIN: Another sausage. Though there's boudin in France, the Louisiana version is a regional specialty made with pork, rice and seasonings. It's often found in restaurants in the form of fried boudin balls.

DRESSED: If you order your poboy dressed, it means you want it "all the way," which means you want it with lettuce, tomato and pickle.

GUMBO: You've heard this term, probably tasted this Louisiana dish. Though it's popped up on menus across the U.S., you're not likely to get the real thing outside of south Louisiana unless it was cooked for you by a transplanted native. A dark, flavorful soup, real gumbo takes a long time to cook and requires a little voodoo to do properly. Most gumbos are variations on two themes: seafood or chicken

and sausage. Served with rice, it can be light brown or dark as swamp water.

MUFFULETTA: This traditional sandwich takes its name from the crusty round Italian bread it's made with. Stuffed inside are several layers of ham, Genoa sausage, Provolone cheese and chopped olive salad. Eaten warm or cold, the giant sandwich usually serves two or more people.

PANEED: Meaning coated in breadcrumbs or dredged in flour and pan-fried gently in butter, as in paneed veal, chicken, frog legs or oysters. (Pron. PAN-aid)

POBOY: A long sandwich on crusty French bread, a poboy really isn't the same as a submarine or a hoagie. It can be ordered with a variety of fillings, including the most popular: fried shrimp or oysters or long-simmered roast beef slathered in gravy.

PRALINES: A simple candy that's nevertheless hard to make well. Most pralines are made with sugar, butter, vanilla (or other flavoring like rum) and nuts. (Pron. PRAW-leen)

RED BEANS AND RICE: You'll often see this as a Monday special at restaurants harking back to the days when south Louisiana women traditionally did the wash on Mondays and needed something slow and easy to ignore on the stove. Red beans are kidney beans and here they're slow-cooked with seasoning meat til almost creamy, then served with white rice. 🦋



Sweet memories

A LOT OF THE OLD TOWN SLIDELL SODA Shop's appeal can be explained by nostalgia. You just don't see places like this much these days. But there's more than sentiment packing the quaint little storefront in Slidell's historic district. Maybe it's the jumbo banana splits dripping butterscotch and fudge. Root beer floats. Soda jerks in white shirts and caps take your order as you stand, childlike, in front of a magic case full of ice cream flavors like Creole cream cheese, Ponchartroula Strawberry and S'mores, all made in house. You can order hot dogs and poboyos, too, but if you do, we suggest you have dessert first. Live a little.

301 COUSIN ST., SLIDELL

Chill with a Snowball

SWEET TREATS OF SHAVED ICE AND FLAVORED syrup may be called snow cones in some parts of the planet, but here in Louisiana, we call them snowballs and we take them seriously. Don't expect to choose from four or five flavors; any snowball stand worthy of the name will offer at least 20 flavors and some 40 or 50. Spearmint. Nectar. Wedding cake. Pina colada. Coconut. Chocolate... Most stands are seasonal, but summer's a long season here and there's a stand in just about every neighborhood, so watch for them.





PHOTO KEVIN GARRETT

FIVE SPOTS

BLIND TIGER

Fish tacos, strong drinks
and a vacation vibe
overlooking the marina.
37330 LAKESHORE
MARINA DRIVE, SLIDELL

LAKEHOUSE

Historic structure has lovely
garden, patio bar and view
of the lake.
2025 LAKESHORE DRIVE, MANDEVILLE

THE CHIMES

Charbroiled oysters, burgers
and beer on decks on the
Bogue Falaya River.
19130 W. FRONT ST., COVINGTON

PALMETTOS

Shaded decks give a great
view of the banks of
Bayou Bonfouca.
1901 BAYOU LANE, SLIDELL

RIPS ON THE LAKE

Enjoy Louisiana
specialties overlooking
Lake Pontchartrain.
1917 LAKESHORE DRIVE, MANDEVILLE

Keepin' it fresh and friendly

Flavors and influences of Louisiana meld in harmony at
Covington's popular nibble-as-you-go Farmers Market

Prepare to yield to temptation. It's okay. Really. The Covington Farmers Market occurs each Saturday morning and is a panoply of pleasures, from beautiful locally grown produce like sweet satsumas, Creole tomatoes and heirloom figs, to artisan breads and other Louisiana specialties like stuffed artichokes and Delta tamales.

Meet Nick Usner, an organic farmer who supplies gorgeous produce like perfect little squashes, hand-foraged chanterelle mushrooms and just-picked okra. Linger over the table at Bear Creek Road where stunning baked goods challenge your will power. There are raw foods, fresh collards, Kombuchas, yard eggs, jams and jellies, aromatic spices, goat's milk cheese and caramel, herbs and sea-

sonal items like mirlitons (known elsewhere as chayote squash).

Don't eat before you go. You can nosh your way through the cultures that shaped old Louisiana and new. Try Greek skordalia, Italian cuccidati, Salvadoran pupusas and Middle Eastern falafel (hot from the fryer) while listening to live music floating from the gazebo. Check out Mauthe's creole cream cheese, an almost lost food that earned the Slow Food Movement's first "Ark of Taste" award.

The market is held from 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays. Get there early for the best selection of fresh-picked produce. 609 N. COLUMBIA, COVINGTON 🦩

A smaller market is held Wednesdays at the Covington Trailhead and there also are markets in Slidell, Mandeville and Abita Springs. For details, visit www.LouisianaNorthshore.com



Let there be beer

Tap into your happy place at one of the Northshore's pubs, brewery tours and tastings

What started in 1986 as a tiny little operation in a local pub in Abita Springs has grown into the country's 14th largest craft brewery – and one of the Northshore's most popular tourist attractions. Abita beer now is found in all 50 states and beyond, expanding its fan base and attracting visitors from across the planet.

Imbibers come by car and by tour bus



(and sometimes by bike, arriving via the nearby Tammany Trace bike path) to taste favorites like Purple Haze and Turbodog at the source.

Self-guided tours are free; guided tours with tastings are \$5. The visitor center and gift shop are open seven days a week and the welcoming taproom makes it easy for anyone to belly up and taste what master brewers, Artesian water and three decades of experience can produce.

The Northshore is represented on the Louisiana Brewery Trail by Abita as well as the small but respected Chafunkta Brewing Company. Chafunkta turns out beer with names like Kingfish Ale and Old 504 (porter) and has a strong local following. Chafunkta's taproom is open Thurs-Sunday for tastings. And the brewery hosts a Saturday bike crawl, too. Check with the brewery for times. Or stop by Old Rail Brewing Company, or the Barley Oak, two fun Mandeville brew pubs, to sample everyone's wares in one spot. 🦀



Shaking it up in Covington

COVINGTON, THE CULINARY HEART OF THE Northshore, has a compact-but-convincing cocktail scene. Check out the small but creative bars at restaurants Oxlot 9, Del Porto and Lola, as well as the Cypress Bar in the Southern Hotel and Wharton's, just down the street.

If a wine bar's more your thing, you'll want to check out the Wine Garden in Slidell, a pleasant space with surprisingly good bites, as well as Barrel Wine in Covington and the new St. Ann Wine Bar in Mandeville.



Hottest table

DINERS ARE VYING FOR DIBS ON THIS gorgeous table in Lola's newest dining space. The popular Covington restaurant introduced its new dining room in February. Housed in a refurbished vintage train car, the dining room is a great spot for lunch or a romantic dinner. Lola, operated by chefs Keith and Nealy Frentz, is located in Covington's old train depot so the dining car is a natural and charming addition. 517 N. NEW HAMPSHIRE, COVINGTON

ADVENTURE

EXPERIENCES

Get in touch with your inner adventurer on the Northshore where you can go biking, hiking, fishing and paddling all year 'round. Rent gear or take a tour but get out there and play.





Rollin' on the river

Tubing down the scenic Bogue Chitto a favorite way to spend a Northshore summer day BY MEGHAN HOLMES

The Bogue Chitto River is a tributary of the Pearl, which serves as the dividing line between Mississippi's southern tip and Louisiana's Florida parishes. The Choctaw named the Bogue Chitto, or "Big Creek," and traveled up and down the length of the Pearl and into the surrounding delta to trade with other Native Americans in the region.

Today's river traffic is often of a different variety, more about recreation than commerce. The river is among the region's most popular tubing destinations, a great spot to enjoy warm sun and cool, gently flowing water. Several outfitters make it easy for visitors to grab a tube and let the Bogue Chitto's meandering current do the work for them as they float a mile or two downstream.

"It's one of the best ways to have lazy, clean, fun," says Ragan Bonnette, who co-owns Louisiana River Adventures with his wife, Haley. "You come out and rent one of our tubes and we shuttle you on an old school bus upriver. There are two- and four-hour trips, depending on how far we take you upstream. A lot of people also spend time on the sand bars alongside the water, having lunch and relaxing, and that adds additional time to the float."

The Bogue Chitto isn't particularly deep, typically four feet or so, though it's deeper in some places while others are

quite shallow. The river is also relatively clear, despite the sandy, shifting bottom that characterizes rivers in this region. Currents shift the sand from shore to shore over time, creating large sandbars that are perfect for lounging riverside. Cow pastures and the occasional camp line the river's edge, and turtles perched on downed limbs are a common sight. Egrets and bald eagles may also make an appearance, but Bonnette explains that, "We are doing a lot of business on this part of the river, so there isn't a whole lot of wildlife. You're out in the country, enjoying the water and time with friends and family."

Tubing trips typically cost around \$20 per person, per tube, and take most of the day, meaning hours spent in direct sunlight. Sunscreen, as well as sun hats and glasses, are recommended. Visitors also wear water-appropriate shoes for exploring sand bars and shoreline. Ice chests with food and drink can be floated downstream. You can drink alcohol on the river, but remember to stay hydrated and be aware of your surroundings.

"I've seen some people start the trip and end it as two different people," Bonnette says, laughing. "But honestly, this is also the perfect family-friendly activity. We have people who come from all over the world to see the river." 🦋



PHOTO KEVIN GARRETT



OUTFITTERS

LOUISIANA RIVER ADVENTURES

Opens 9 a.m. with last float at 4 p.m. Open April-September. Two- to 4-hour floats; shuttles. LOUISIANARIVERADVENTURES.COM

BOGUE CHITTO TUBING CENTER

Opens 9 a.m. All floats must be complete by 7pm. Open seasonally beginning in April. No children under age 5 can tube. BOGUECHITTO.COM

ROCKY BOTTOM

TUBING AND CANOEING

Located inside Bogue Chitto State Park, opens at 7 a.m. with tubes for seasonal day use. Tubes can also be dropped off and picked up at rental cabins in the state park. FACEBOOK.COM/ROCKBOTTOMTUBE



GEAUX GREEN

Bask in the beauty of the verdant Northshore

Boardwalk at
Northlake Nature
Center, Mandeville





On the road to discovery

Explore the Northshore from the winding Tammany Trace hike-bike trail STORY AND PHOTOS BY KEVIN GARRETT

Patrick Brooks of Brooks' Bike Shop

The Tammany Trace, Louisiana's first rail-trail pathway, is the perfect way to explore St. Tammany Parish. Adapted from a former Illinois Central Railroad corridor, this flat asphalt ribbon – a favorite with cyclists and hikers -- winds its way for almost 31 miles through piney woods and moss-draped live oaks from Covington, to Abita Springs, Mandeville, Lacombe, and on to Slidell.

The Trace is a magic carpet ride through a place rich with natural beauty and residents happy to share their vibrant heritage with visitors. All skill-level bike riders will find the Trace a comfort zone. (No motorized vehicles are allowed.) Between towns, you may be accompanied by red-shouldered hawks and ospreys flying overhead and herons and egrets hunting in the marsh. If the silence is broken, it's by a chorus of bullfrogs croaking in the bayou. Bikers range from compression-pant-clad Tour de France dreamers whizzing by on racing bikes to families leisurely pedaling on their cruisers.

Visitors can rent bikes at Brooks' Bike Shop, conveniently located at the start of the Trace in downtown Covington. You might want to explore the historic district before hitting the Trace. Dotted with boutiques, galleries, restaurants, coffee shops and little museums (check out HJ Smith & Sons General Store & Museum), Covington also has a fun farmers market twice a week, great for picking up snacks for the Trace and mingling with the locals.

Several breweries and brew pubs are found along or near the Trace, including Abita Beer, Tchefoncte Brewery and the Old Rail Brewing Company. Also adjacent to the Trace and just 3.5 miles from Covington, the Abita Brew Pub in Abita Springs offers patio seating with views of the trail, pub food and tasting flights of Abita Beer. While in Abita, park and check out the Abita Mystery House, a quirky folk museum housed in an old gas station. (See pg 33.)

Continuing south from Abita toward Lake Pontchartrain and Mandeville, you'll pass through lovely green spaces





WHERE TO RENT BIKES

BROOKS' BIKE SHOP

Wheel guru Patrick Brooks operates two bike shops on the Northshore, one in Mandeville near the lakefront and another in downtown Covington at the start of the Tammany Trace bike path. Brooks' offers bike rentals for all ages and you can even pick out your bike in advance online. You can also sign up for tours (with as few as three people) of the Tammany Trace, Old Covington, Old Mandeville and there's even a Breweries tour by bike. BROOKSBIKESHOP.COM

BAYOU ADVENTURE

Rent bikes for the whole family at this one-stop outpost for Northshore exploration. Kayak rentals and guided paddling tours, too. BAYOUADVENTURE.COM

and see the Trace's official trailhead just north of Interstate 12. Riding on, pass through a tunnel under I-12 to Mandeville's Trailhead, now a little park with museum, amphitheater, splash fountain and Saturday community market. At the site of the town's old train depot, the Trailhead has become the heart of the historic district.

Leave the Trace for a short jaunt on the Trace's spur along the Mandeville lakefront which takes riders past elegant 19th-century homes and old moss-hung oaks before connecting with the main trail again and heading toward Fontainebleau State Park. Look for photo ops at the 2,800-acre park's sandy beach, brick ruins of an 1829 sugar mill or among the majestic moss-draped live oaks.

Rolling on, between the park and the small fishing town of Lacombe, bikers find the peaceful stretch of the wetlands of Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge. Encompassing 18,000 acres along the Northshore between Mandeville and Slidell, the Refuge's freshwater and brack-

ish marshes, bayous, and cypress tupelo forest offer shelter to creatures such as red-cockaded woodpecker, wood ducks, deer, mink, otter, and alligators.

Break for refreshments at Lacombe's Bayou Adventure, a short hop from the Trace. The one-stop shop serves as outpost and outfitter, with bait, cold drinks, hot pizza and even gear rentals, including bikes, as well as advice for your ride.

Leaving Lacombe, you'll continue on toward Slidell and the end of the Trace. Though the path currently stops short of the city's historic district, there are plans to eventually extend the Trace all the way into Olde Towne Slidell's Heritage Park.

Some things to know: The Trace is open dawn to dusk. Travel from one end to the other and cross 31 bridges built over the old railroad trestles. In 2017, the Trace was inducted into the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Hall of Fame. The Conservancy declared the Trace had "scenic beauty, historical significance, exemplary management and plentiful trailside amenities." 🦋



Ready to paddle the bayou?

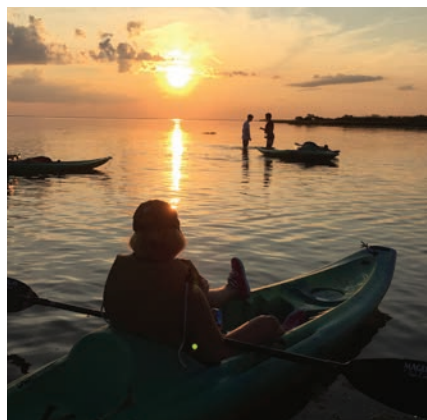
Outfitters make it easy with canoe and kayak rentals and guided tours through the Louisiana waterscape

With scenic rivers, bayous and Lake Pontchartrain to explore, the Northshore is a great spot for paddlers, especially in spring and summer when nature is at its most beautiful.

There are a number of easily accessible launch spots across the area. You can bring your own gear but you don't have to. Kayaks, canoes and paddleboards are available for rent at several locations and there are tour operators happy to take you out for a day on the water. Or an evening. Two operators – Canoe and Trail and Bayou Adventure – both offer sunset paddles down Cane Bayou to the lake just in time to catch the glorious pink, purple and gold sunsets we have come to expect here but never tire of seeing.

A guide is great for pointing out the wildlife along the way and sharing knowledge about the bayou but a serene paddle on your own lets you explore at your own

pace. Enjoy the scenery -- watch for osprey and eagles, boar on the banks and alligators in the reeds under moss-draped branches – or try your luck fishing from your kayak. Bayou Adventure is your one-stop shop for bait, snacks and gear (rent or buy) and they're happy to share their expansive knowledge of the area's waterways with visitors. 🦋



Fun is catching

FISHING'S A FAVORITE PASTIME ON THE Northshore and a fun activity year-round for families who can throw out a line from Lake Road's marshy banks in Lacombe, Sunset Pier in Mandeville, or from the St. Tammany Parish Fishing Pier in Slidell. But there's action for serious anglers, too, thanks to the many charter captains working out of Northshore marinas.

With easy access to the Lake Pontchartrain, Lake Borgne, the Rigolets Pass and the Biloxi Marsh, charters are a great way to spend the day on the water. Area captains know where to go for trophy trout, record redfish, largemouth bass and more. Some, like Mike Gallo of Angling Adventures of Louisiana and Dudley Vandenberg, famous for his Deadly Dudley lures, make regular appearances on Louisiana fishing shows, sharing expertise and tips on where fish are biting.

BASIC INFO: Charters often start just before daylight and end early afternoon. Most charters can carry five or six people. You don't need to know the difference between spinnerbait and jigging spoons; most welcome anglers of all skill levels and all ages, too. You'll need to make a reservation. You won't have to clean your fish; your captain does that for you.

Stand up out on the water

FUN FOR ALL AGES, STAND-UP paddleboarding has been growing rapidly on the Northshore. Watch for paddleboarders on Lake Pontchartrain and in the Tchefuncte River. You can rent paddleboards at several locations, including the Abita Board Barn, Seal Sports, Brooks' Bike Shop and Bayou Adventure. A couple more favorite paddleboarding spots: the gentle waters just off the sandy beach at Fontainebleau State Park and the shallow Bogue Falaya River as it flows into Covington. Paddleboarders here often stop for a burger and beer break at The Chimes along the river's verdant banks.



PHOTO MARK SALVETTI



Honey Island Swamp a must-see

Tour boats take visitors for up-close encounters with nature's beauty and a few of its beasts

The Honey Island Swamp, on the northeast edge of St. Tammany Parish, is pristine and lovely, especially in the spring when cypress trees go from dormant to brilliant green. Everything surges to life, the flora and especially the fauna; there are deer and boar, raccoons and nutria, and an abundance of bird life circling, soaring, building nests.

You'll see turtles, too, sometimes several of them, soaking in sunshine from the tops of old logs. And yes, there are gators. Watching warily from muddy banks, cruising by your tour boat with curiosity. Several tour companies, including Dr. Wagner's, Pearl River Eco-Tours and

Cajun Encounters, take visitors into the Honey Island Swamp (and yes, bring them out, too). Reservations are a good idea. Most tours run about two hours and are given on easy-to-board boats launching from Slidell.

The Honey Island Swamp encompasses almost 70,000 acres, more than half of which is preserved for posterity as part of the Pearl River Wildlife Management Area. Keep an eye out for pileated woodpeckers and great blue herons stalking a bullfrog dinner. And for the Honey Island Swamp Monster, a Bigfoot-like creature some say has called the marsh home for centuries. 🦋

NORTHSHORE EXPLORE



PHOTO KEVIN GARRETT

COME ON IN

Make the acquaintance of a zebra at the country's largest free-roaming wildlife park. Hatch a baby reptile in your hand at a gator farm. Take a hike or a swim at a Northshore park. There's a lot to discover.



GATOR FACTS

- The American alligator averages about 800 pounds and can be 10-15 feet long, though the largest ever recorded was found here in Louisiana and measured 19.2 feet.
- Alligators can run about 20 miles per hour in short bursts.
- The state's alligator population is around two million, the most of any state. After population declines by the mid-20th century, harvest quotas were put into place. Populations now are at sustainable levels.
- Diet consists mostly of fish, turtles, small mammals and birds, though alligators have been known to attack dogs, deer and on rare occasions, humans.
- Alligators today represent a \$50 million industry for Louisiana. Shoes, purses and other items of alligator skin fetch high prices and the meat, which is classified as seafood (but, yes, tastes like chicken), is increasingly offered in restaurants.
- Mating season is April to May. Females build a nest and lay 20-60 eggs, then cover the nest with vegetation and hang out til August when eggs begin to hatch.
- As a species, alligators have been around for about 37 million years.

Plenty o' gators, baby

Learn all about Louisiana's favorite reptile, even hatch one in your hand, at Insta-Gator Ranch

If you're interested in alligators — and, really, who isn't? — we've got the place for you. Insta-Gator Ranch and Hatchery near Covington is home to more than 2,000 alligators and a few humans who interact with them. Insta-Gator offers fun and educational tours and program that will teach you all about the prehistoric reptiles and even give you a chance to touch one.

The ranch is open year-round but is more active when the gators are. Spring and summer are great times to visit, especially August when you can make a res-

ervation to actually hatch a baby gator in your hand! It's quite an experience to hold an egg and see the little creatures emerge from the shell.

Visitors hear all about the harvesting of gator eggs, often from area waterways like Bayou Castine, and watch a video before visiting alligators in tanks in their covered barns. There's a touch pool and gift shop at Insta-gator, too, where they like to say you'll learn everything about the American alligator from "hatchling to handbag." 🦎



PHOTO BILL LANG

Play, explore, relax

Enjoy sandy beaches, nature walks, birding and more in the Northshore's many parks and wilderness preserves

There are more than 80,000 acres of green space in St. Tammany Parish, not the least of which is accessible and easily enjoyed through parks and reserves.

Fontainebleau State Park is 4,000 gorgeous lakefront acres on what formerly was the site of an early 19th century sugar plantation. You can still see the ruins of Bernard de Marigny's sugar mill, as well as giant moss-draped oaks and wildlife. There are camping areas, a sandy beach, pavilions, walking trails and a boardwalk, as well as cabins built on stilts over the lake. Kayak, hike, bike, fish or just relax.

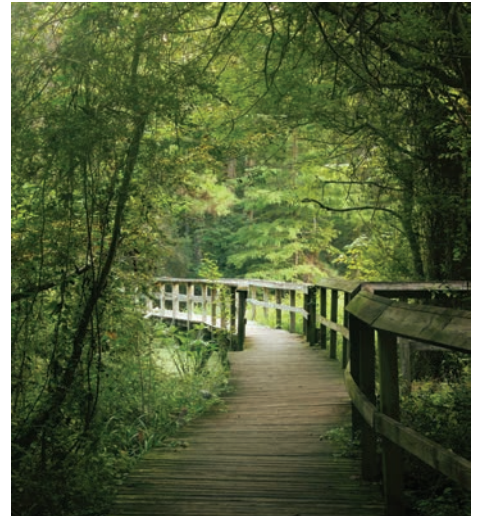
Nearby is lovely **Northlake Nature Center**, a 400-acre preserve located along the banks of Bayou Castine. There are about 7 miles of trails taking you through three different eco-systems. Among the sights: a grove of giant magnolias, boardwalk overlooking a beaver lodge, and, if you're lucky, you might catch a glimpse of the center's flock of wild turkeys. NNC hosts the Great Louisiana BirdFest each

spring (BirdFest 2019 will be April 5-8; details on pg 7).

Fairview-Riverside State Park is in Madisonville on the banks of the Tche-functe River. At not quite 100 acres, the park is smaller but offers a campground, plus fishing, hiking and pretty grounds. The Otis House Museum, within the park and offering tours, was built in 1885 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999.

Over in Lacombe, **Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Reserve** is a great place to get out in nature, offering 15,000 acres of south Louisiana ecosystems. Visitors enjoy hiking, fishing and birding along its waterways and trails. The two-mile Boy Scout Road Interpretive Trail includes a boardwalk and overlook at Bayou Lacombe.

Other spots to check out are the **Lake Ramsey Savannah WMA** and the **Nature Conservancy's Abita Creek Flatwoods Preserve** which features a Pitcher Plant Boardwalk. 🐛





WHILE IN ABITA

Check out these local hotspots.

ABITA BREW PUB

This cool spot in the heart of town was the original home of Abita Brewery before it outgrew the space and moved a short way down the road. (See Pg. 20) There's good casual food, a great mural and some of the original brewing equipment. And beer.

ABITA SPRINGS ART AND FARMERS MARKET

Held noon-4 p.m. each Sunday at the Trailhead park, the market features prepared food, produce, arts and crafts, live music and who knows what else you'll find. Fun, friendly and free.

MAPLE STREET BAKERY

A sweet little bake shop, Maple Street is known for specialty cake and baked goods like apple turnovers and muffins. Take a break and treat yourself while contemplating the 100-plus-year-old cottage's reputation as haunted.

It's a mystery (house)

Prepare to be amused — and maybe confused — at Abita's wonderful and wacky roadside attraction

The Abita Mystery House celebrates itself as Louisiana's "most eccentric museum" and likely is. The funky-licious little place, cool and goofy at the same time, is a short stroll from Abita Springs Town Hall and has welcomed the curious from all over the world.

Sprung from the brain of Abita impresario/artist John Preble, the Mystery House is a roadside attraction-like emporium crammed with outsider art, Southern wit and the flotsam and jetsam of modern life. Fun for all ages, the Mystery House has hands-on exhibits, dioramas with moving parts, mythical creatures like the Bassigator (half fish, half gator) and the Dogigator (half dog, half ... you know), and what may be the state's best gift shop.

Preble's fertile imagination has birthed some of Abita Springs' most fun and quintessentially Abita events, including the Whole Town Garage Sale, the Bicycle Festival and the delightfully wacky Push Mow Mardi Gras parade.

When you visit the little museum, enjoy the place at face value or cogitate on the Nature of Art, just not too hard. Bring your sense of humor. And three bucks. Because that's what it costs to get in at the Mystery House, where "everyone is welcome, even your family." 22275 HIGHWAY 36, ABITA SPRINGS 🦟





You'll go wild for Global

Pet, feed and commune with exotic animals at the country's largest free-roaming wildlife preserve

The excitement builds on the approach. Scenery along rural, tree-lined Highway 40, as it ribbons through the northwestern corner of St. Tammany Parish, begins subtly to change. Suddenly open grassland resembles an African savanna – and in more ways than one. The sight of decidedly not native creatures – zebras and Father David deer, giraffes and elands – signal that you are about to enter a special place.

Global Wildlife Center is the largest free-roaming wildlife preserve in the U.S., home to more than 4,000 exotic and endangered animals living on 900 scenic acres. Visitors have two options to explore Global. Many opt for the safari tours in large motorized wagons that travel the grounds, providing on-high views and the opportunity to toss feed to many of the animals as they approach the wagon.

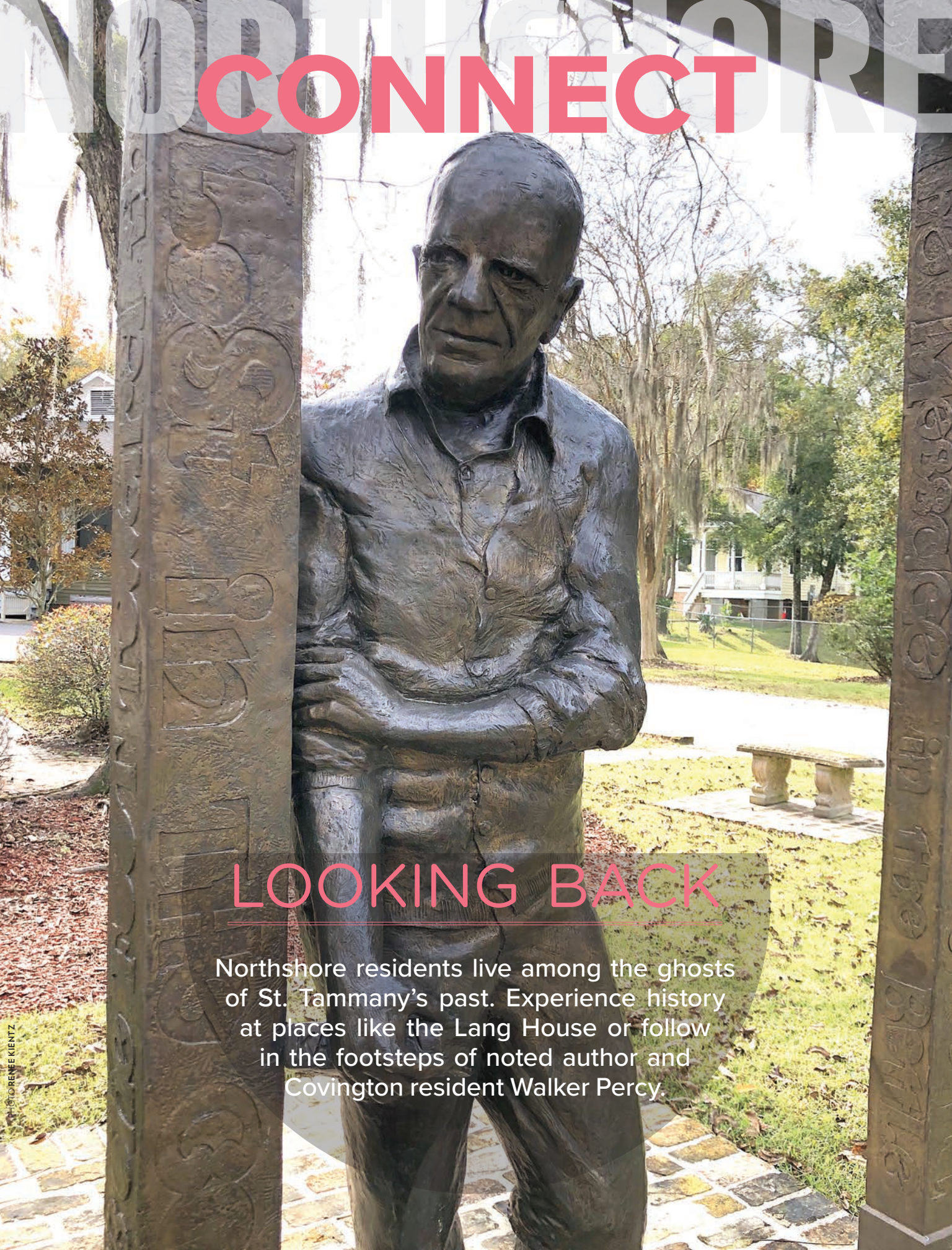
The private Pinzgauer tours are a great choice for families and animal lovers who want a unique and once-in-a-lifetime encounter. Seating up to eight people, the

4x4 vehicles put guests eye level with Global's inhabitants who often follow or surround the vehicle. Stroke a giraffe's neck as she leans over your shoulder. Amazingly beautiful up close, the giraffes are persistent – they want that corn! – but gentle. Touch the massive, wooly head of an American bison, or the horn of Watutsi cattle, as it feeds from your hand. Deer, llamas and zebras come up close, and gaggles of fat geese waddle at top speed behind the Pinz as it pulls away.

Safari tours are given several times daily; Pinzgauer tours require reservations. Both make unforgettable memories for kids of all ages. 26389 HIGHWAY 40, FOLSOM 🐾



PHOTO: KEVIN GARRETT (2)



NORTHSHORE CONNECT

LOOKING BACK

Northshore residents live among the ghosts of St. Tammany's past. Experience history at places like the Lang House or follow in the footsteps of noted author and Covington resident Walker Percy.



PHOTO: RENE KIENTZ

A new home for history

After renovations and updates, the Bayou Lacombe Museum reopens to showcase the area's fascinating, diverse heritage

History and culture meet in the newly reopened Bayou Lacombe Museum. Housed in the oldest existing wooden schoolhouse in St. Tammany Parish, the museum is located at 61115 St. Mary St. in the hamlet of Lacombe. Originally a two-room schoolhouse, the building was constructed in 1912 and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Situated along Bayou Lacombe in the heart of St. Tammany Parish, the little community played an important early role in the development of the region, providing materials like timber and clay (for bricks) to build the growing city of New Orleans in its early years. French colonists settled in the area, and along with the Choctaw, and later African-Americans, formed a new and unique population whose descendants still live there today.

Museum exhibits explore 18th-, 19th- and 20th-century life in Lacombe. Some feature the Choctaw and their beloved Father Adrien Rouquette, a Catholic missionary they would come to call "Chahta-

Ima," meaning "like a Choctaw." Others showcase rural life, as well as the primary industries that built the town (lumber, brickmaking, crabbing, boat-building shipping goods to New Orleans). The little museum's Hall of Heroes is dedicated to residents who served in the military.

After serving as a school for decades, the building was used as a museum and community center for more than 40 years before closing a few years ago. After updates and renovations to repair termite damage, the Bayou Lacombe Museum reopened in February. The reopening was a labor of love for many donors, volunteers and other Lacombe residents who collected and organized artifacts, designed and built exhibits and raised funding.

Today the museum is a welcoming space with high ceilings, tall windows and beautiful old wooden floors. The museum is open Thursday-Sunday, so stop by. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$2 for seniors, and free for children under 12 accompanied by an adult, as well as for school groups. 🐛

Don't miss...

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN BASIN MARITIME MUSEUM: Explore the area's rich maritime history via a film, detailed exhibits and boat models. Learn more about the 1837 Tchefuncte River lighthouse and visit the lighthouse keeper's restored home. The museum hosts the popular Wooden Boat Festival each October.

133 MABEL DRIVE, MADISONVILLE

SLIDELL MUSEUM: Housed in the old town's jail, the museum displays two floors of photos and memorabilia from Slidell's history as well as the South's role in the Civil War. Also on site is the Mardi Gras Museum, with more than 800 Carnival items.

2020 FIRST ST., SLIDELL

OTIS HOUSE MUSEUM: Guided tours of this late 19th-century lumber baron's home include memorabilia and photographs from the area. The home is on the grounds of Fairview-Riverside State Park.

119 FAIRVIEW DRIVE, MADISONVILLE

St. Tammany timeline

Originally home to Choctaw and other tribes, the parish has been shaped by various cultures and events

1600 B.C.

The Choctaw inhabit the northern shore of Lake Pontchartrain, which they called Okwa'ta (meaning "wide water").

1699

Explorers Pierre LeMoyne Sieur d'Iberville and Jean Batiste LeMoyne Sieur de Bienville check out the Northshore.

1803

The U.S. acquires 828,000 square miles of territory in the Louisiana Purchase, which does not include St. Tammany Parish.

1810

The Republic of West Florida is formed to revolt against Spanish authority in the area — and lasts 74 days.

1812

Louisiana admitted to the Union in April. West Florida resists but becomes part of the state five months later.

1830

Bernard de Marigny builds sugar plantation (now Fontainebleau State Park), then founds Mandeville a few miles west.

1887

Tourism boom begins in Abita Springs when a doctor declares the area's local springs have restorative qualities.

1956

First span of the 24-mile Pontchartrain Causeway is built, creating the longest continuous bridge over water in the world.



PHOTO: RENEE KIENTZ



Walk through Mandeville's past

Learn about 19th-century life in the lakefront town via tours of the Jean Baptiste Lang House

From the street, the Jean Baptiste Lang House looks perfectly suited to its site, blending gracefully into this historic Old Mandeville neighborhood as if it had held that spot for all of its 160-plus years. Picket fence, welcoming porch. As nestled into its environs as it is, the Lang House didn't begin its life here on Carroll Street.

A classic example of an indigenous architectural style, the Anglo-Creole cottage, the Lang House was a raggedy mess, porch mangled, boards missing, after hurricane Katrina pushed flood waters into the structure where it stood on its original site along the Mandeville lakefront. Facing demolition, the little house was rescued in 2011 via a cooperative endeavor between the City of Mandeville and the newly formed Old Mandeville Historic Association, moving it a few blocks inland. Today, restored, the cottage has become the Jean Baptiste Lang House Museum, offering a unique glimpse into the history of Mandeville.

Tour the Lang House and learn that

it was built in the early 1850s, believed to have been finished in 1852, by Belgian-born Jean Baptiste Lang, a prosperous tobacconist who operated two shops in New Orleans' French Quarter. The little cottage was meant to be a summer home, as were many in Mandeville; wealthy New Orleanians used the Northshore as a means to get away from the city's brutal summer heat, mosquitoes and yellow fever. Lang, also escaping a nasty divorce, resided there off and on for almost a decade before returning to his native Belgium just before the start of the Civil War. He died in 1861.

On tours, museum curator Adele Foster points out the mortise and tenon construction, exposed scarf joints, original box columns and walls of shiplap cypress planking. Some portions of the walls have faux bois (literally meaning 'fake wood'), a technique of hand painting on graining to replicate more expensive woods. Tours are free, though donations are welcomed. 605 CARROLL ST., MANDEVILLE 🐜



The Walker Percy Trail

You can still trace the footsteps of this Covington resident and National Book Award winner

Born in Alabama in 1916, noted author Walker Percy moved to Covington on the Northshore in 1948. It was here that he wrote his most famous books, including “The Moviegoer,” which won a National Book Award in 1962, as well as “Last Gentleman,” “The Second Coming,” and “Love in the Ruins.” The philosophical novelist was a devout Catholic, devoted to his family and reportedly fond of bourbon and naps.

MANDEVILLE

2025 LAKESHORE DRIVE: Currently The Lakehouse Restaurant, the structure built in 1834 by Bernard de Marigny was for decades known as Bechac’s. The lakefront restaurant was a favorite gathering spot for Percy who met friends for lunch there every Thursday. Among those friends was Bill Binnings, a noted artist who later would create the two bronze statues of Percy erected in honor of the writer. Today you can still sip a cocktail, enjoy lunch and a view of the lake, just as Percy did often.

COVINGTON

BOSTON ST. AT LEE LANE: A Louisiana Historic Marker denotes details of Percy’s life and residence in Covington. The marker is less than a block from where Percy maintained an office in his daughter’s book shop. (See next item.)

228 LEE LANE: Now a boutique called the French Mix, this quaint cottage formerly housed the Kumquat Book Shop, owned by Percy’s daughter. The author often wrote upstairs in his little office on the shop’s second floor.

213 PARK DRIVE: One of Bill Binnings’ statues of Percy stands in Bogue Falaya Wayside Park in downtown Covington. The 9-foot-tall bronze sculpture depicts Percy standing in a doorway. Percy and his wife Mary Bernice “Bunt” Townsend

lived a short distance from the park, near 8th Street and Jahncke.

HIGHWAY 21 JUST SOUTH OF OSWALD ROAD: Another historic marker denotes the ‘Original Homestead of Walker Percy,’ the property he first bought in 1948 when he moved to Covington. The marker is on the lefthand side of the highway, also known as Military Road, if you’re driving north.

2 PINECREST DRIVE: A creature of habit, Percy met his brother Phinazy “Phin” Percy and friends for lunch every Wednesday here, at Tchefuncta Country Club.

ST. BENEDICT

75376 RIVER ROAD: St. Joseph’s Abbey. Percy is buried in the small cemetery at this Benedictine Abbey just northeast of Covington. His gravesite is marked by a small, plain stone. Percy served as a secular oblate of the Abbey, spending much time there in contemplation.

MADISONVILLE

1123 MAIN ST.: Stop here, at the Madisonville branch library, to visit with a large bronze statue of Percy seated on a bench with his beloved Corgi, Sweet Thing. The sculpture, by artist and Percy friend Binnings, sits in the library’s Serenity Circle outside its main entrance. 🐾



SPLURGE

cameo

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TREAT
YOURSELF

Some of us just love to shop,
ya know? You'll find plenty of
shopping ops on the North-
shore, so let's go!

Find eclectic goods and greenery at the Lemon Tree.



FIVE SPOTS

FREMAUX TOWN CENTER, SLIDELL

Tenants at this sprawling center include Best Buy, Dillards, Dick's Sporting Goods, TJ Maxx and numerous restaurants. Located off the Fremaux exit. (If you're looking for antiques, head to Olde Towne Slidell, a few minutes away.)

DOWNTOWN COVINGTON

The town's historic district is a walkable feast for shopaholics, with quaint streets, cottage boutiques, restaurants, galleries and so much more. Check out Lee Lane, Rutland and Columbia streets for sure. You'll find antiques, art, jewelry, gift items, clothing and free parking, too.

PREMIER SHOPPING CENTERS, MANDEVILLE

The Gap, Old Navy, Banana Republic and Ann Taylor Loft are among the shops at this large center on Highway 190.

RIVER CHASE SHOPPING CENTER, COVINGTON

Located at I-12 and Highway 21, the center beckons with Best Buy, Marshall's, Target, Lane Bryant and more. (Restaurants and a multiplex movie theater, too.)

PINNACLE NORD DU LAC, COVINGTON

Find Kohl's, Kirkland's and Academy here, as well as specialty shops like Ban Soleil and Bra Genie. Restaurants, lodging and more coming. I-12 at Pinnacle Parkway.

Spend a day in Old Mandeville

Find charming boutiques, fun-to-browse antiques shops on and near walkable historic district's quaint Girod Street

Hear that? It's the siren call from Old Mandeville's little stretch of shops along Girod Street. An assortment of shopping opportunities are found in the cute 19th century cottages lining the blocks down to the lakefront.

Shop for clothing and accessories at Cameo Boutique. Antique hunters will find plenty to peruse in Mae's, where you'll discover some very laid-back Scotties wandering the rooms crammed with vintage stuff. Buy Louisiana-themed art and gift items at the welcoming Pappion Gallery or a Bavarian nutcracker at Das Schulerhaus where it's Christmas all year-round.

Just off Girod Street on Jefferson, check out the Lemon Tree. The great little shop bills itself as a "floral, garden and interiors boutique," and the inventory changes daily. There are gorgeous fresh blooms like peonies and

lilies, greenery and pots but also housewares, jewelry, vintage items and more.

Girod Street is the heart of historic Old Mandeville, a charming walkable district with restaurants, bed and breakfasts and oak-lined lakefront. 🦋



Palmettos grow wild
in the Northshore's
marshland and forests.

PHOTO LANA GRAMLICH

10 Things to Do on **LOUISIANA'S NORTHSHORE**



Whether you're looking for priceless and free activities, girlfriends' getaways ideas, things to do with the kids, or ways to enjoy our waterways, we've got suggestions for you to build your perfect trip around.

Start planning at:

louisiananorthshore.com/things-to-do/top-ten

