

Walking in the oldest part of New Orleans is much more fun than driving. It is also more practical; you can do it at your own pace. Allow about 3 hours for the tour, or longer if you wish to stop at those sites that are open to the public. In case you wish to take an abbreviated tour, items 15–17 and 18–26 are recommended as especially representative of the French Quarter. Be sure to stop by the Visitor Information Center at 529 St. Ann Street, in the Pontalba Building!

We are happy to help you in any way we can. Anywhere on your route, if we can help, call us at 566-5009.

Items marked with an () may be open to the public. Check for days and hours.*

301 Chartres St. Site of Koly Townhouse First Ursuline Convent and Charity Hospital. The townhouse built on this site shortly after the founding of New Orleans in 1718 was later leased for use as a provisional convent by the Ursuline nuns, then used for the first Charity Hospital. Walk 1 block down Bienville to Royal Street. Turn right. At the end of the block is

334 Royal Street. Old Bank of Louisiana. This beautiful building was completed in 1826 to house the Bank of Louisiana. For years this intersection was the city's financial hub, with a bank on three of the four corners. Currently the site of the French Quarter Police Station. Walk across Royal to

343 Royal Street. Old Bank of the United States. This structure, built in 1800, is the oldest of the many buildings in which banks have been located. Its balcony railings are exceptionally good examples of hand forged (wrought) ironwork. Next, cross Conti Street to

403 Royal Street. Old Louisiana State Bank. The bank opened for business in 1821, designed by one of the architects of the U.S. Capitol in Washington: Benjamin H. Latrobe. That large white building across the street is the entire

400 block of Royal Street. New Orleans Court Building. Erected in 1908-09, this marble edifice was occupied by the Louisiana Wild Life Museum and the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Fifth Judicial District. Across from the main entrance of the court building is

417 Royal Street. Casa Favrie. Built soon after 1801 for the maternal grandfather of the French Impressionist painter, Edgar Degas. When General Andrew Jackson revisited New Orleans in 1828, he attended lavish banquets here. The cross-street ahead of you is St. Louis. Turn left. Go a block and a half to

820 St. Louis Street. The Hermann-Grima House. This house was constructed in 1831 by William Brand for Samuel Hermann, Sr., a well-to-do commission merchant. Hermann sold the premises in 1844 to Felix Grima, a prominent attorney and notary. Retrace your steps to Royal. Turn left. In the middle of the block is

520 Royal Street. Mason Seignouret. Francois Seignouret, a French wine merchant, built this splendid house in 1816. He was a talented furniture maker. Across Royal is

533 Royal Street. Merieult House. In 1794, fire swept through the center of the city. Only two principal structures escaped the flames. One of them was this dignified building, built in 1792 by Jean Francois Merieult. It now houses the Historic New Orleans Collection of maps, prints, drawings, documents and artifacts. Cross the street to

536 Royal Street. Casa de Comercio. An excellent example of forthright Spanish architecture in New Orleans. This building was built shortly after the December 1794 fire. Recross Royal to 537 Royal and 710 Toulouse Streets. Court of Two Lions. The feature which gives this building its name is visible on the Toulouse Street side; a wide wooden gate in a high wall, the pillars

surmounted by a pair of stone lions. Return to Royal. Walk one block to St. Peter. Turn left and go to

714 St. Peter Street. LeMonnier House. Built in 1829. This house acquired its most notable occupant in 1860, Antoine Alcatoire. Antoine operated a boarding house preparing such succulent dishes that his fame spread and eventually led to his opening the restaurant which gave him an international reputation and which his direct descendants still own and operate. Only a few steps away is

718 St. Peter Street. Maison de Flechier. This ancient structure is believed to have been commissioned by the well-known planter, Etienne Marie de Flechier, after the fire of 1794. A famous-name bar now occupies both the building and the magnificent courtyard behind it. Return to Royal. At the opposite corner is

640 Royal Street. Maison LeMonnier (First Skyscraper). Frequently described as the first skyscraper, this three-story structure was built in 1811, and the third-floor study is regarded as the most beautiful chamber, architecturally, in New Orleans. Wrought into the iron balcony railings can be seen the doctor's initials, "JLM". Now turn off Royal onto St. Peter. A little more than half a block along is

615 St. Peter Street. Louisiana State Arsenal. During the years of Spanish dominance, this was the site of the prison, or calabozo. After the American takeover in 1803, the State of Louisiana constructed a state arsenal on this spot for the Louisiana Legion, a military organization made up of sons of the state's best families, Creole and American. Now, the building is a part of the Louisiana

State Museum complex, but the insignia of the Louisiana Legion—crossed cannons above a pile of cannonballs—and its monogram, "LL", can still be seen in the wrought-iron railing of the right-hand balcony fronting Pirates Alley (see 16). As you face the Spanish Arsenal, walk left for a couple of steps and turn right into a short alley, Cabildo Alley. Ahead of you is another longer passageway. It is

Pirates Alley. Alas for its romantic name, and for the legend that somewhere along this passage Major General Jackson conferred with the freebooters Jean and Pierre Lafitte about the forthcoming defense of New Orleans, the alley simply did not exist at that time! It was cut 16 years later (1831), and given the official name, Ruelle d'Orleans, meaning something like Orleans Walkway, South (see also No. 19). Now walk toward Royal Street and stop at

Royal at Orleans Street, behind the St. Louis Cathedral Garden. The marble monument in the center of this small, iron-fenced garden was erected by the Minister of the Navy under Napoleon III. Cross Royal to Orleans. Walk half a block. On your right is a hotel. Note the section above the main entrance at

717 Orleans Avenue. The Orleans Ballroom. John Davis opened his famed Orleans Ballroom in 1817. Here, for the next 20 years, Davis would operate his Orleans Theatre and establish French Opera in America. In 1881, the Sisters of the Holy Family, an order of black nuns

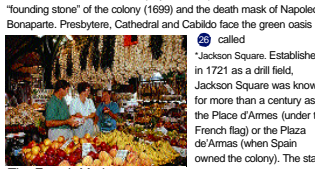
devoted to teaching, acquired the property for a motherhouse and school. Finally, in 1964, the sisters, pressed by a need to expand the facilities, sold the property to hotel interests. New additions replace some of the structures built by the nuns, but the old Orleans Ballroom remains. Go back to Royal and turn left on the far side of the Cathedral Garden from Pirates Alley.

*Royal to Chartres Street, between the Cathedral and

parish churches only; when the third was dedicated, on Christmas Eve of 1794, it was a cathedral. In 1964, Pope Paul VI designated this a minor basilica. Next door, again to the left, is

The Cabildo. During Spanish rule, this structure housed the governing council, or Cabildo, of the colony. The structure was erected in 1779, but burned in 1788. Don Andres Almonester y Roxas then contributed the funds for construction of a replacement. Built in 1795-99. The splendid wrought-iron balcony railing, called the finest work from the Spanish period in New Orleans, is attributed to Marcelino Hernandez. From this building, France, then Spain, then France again, then the United States, the Confederate States and finally, the United States again, have governed. In a second floor room, known as the Sala Capitulat, France ceded the territory of the Louisiana Purchase to the U.S. in 1803. Today a part of the Louisiana State Museum, the Cabildo displays such important items as the "founding stone" of the colony (1699) and the death mask of Napoleon Bonaparte. Presbytere, Cathedral and Cabildo face the green oasis

called Jackson Square. Established in 1721 as a drill field, Jackson Square was known for more than a century as the Place d'Armes (under the French flag) or the Plaza de Armes (when Spain owned the colony). The statue of General Jackson on his rearing horse, the work of sculptor Clark Mills, was put in place in 1856 and is the world's first equestrian statue with more than one hoof unsupported. Bordering Jackson Square on two sides you will see the



The French Market

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Turn left. Go one block to Chartres. To your right will be 400 Block of Esplanade. The Old United States Mint. Fort San Carlos stood here in the 1700's. The United States completed construction of the Mint in 1839. Now a Louisiana State Museum, the Mint housed both a Jazz and Mardi Gras exhibition. Walk back past the

French Market on Decatur and take a right on Ursuline Street. Go one block to Chartres. To your left is 1114 Chartres Street. Old Ursulines Convent. This is one of the oldest structures in the Mississippi Valley (for the other, see No. 37). The Sisters of St. Ursula, who came to New Orleans from France in 1727, moved into this structure in 1749. Theirs was the first nunnery in Louisiana, and they conducted the first Catholic School, the first

Indian school, the first Negro school and the first orphanage. The Convent housed the Louisiana State Legislature from 1831 to 1834. Across Chartres can be seen

1113 Chartres Street. Le Carpentier House ("Beauregard House"). On a part of the three city squares which he bought from the Ursuline nuns, a highly regarded New Orleans auctioneer named Joseph Le Carpentier built this handsome residence in 1827. With him lived his daughter and her husband, attorney, Alonzo Morphy. During the bleak winter of 1866-67, following the end of the Civil War, Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard, the "Great Creole" rented a room in this house while seeking a job. In recent years, the house and the garden was the residence of the prolific and popular novelist Frances Parkinson Keyes, who adopted New Orleans as her own and who wrote many books about the region. In the same block is

1133 Chartres Street. Sonnet House. About 1829, wealthy aristocratic planter, Joseph Sonnet duFossat, built this place as a town house. In the 1860's, the wrought iron with which Monsieur duFossat had

embellished his home was torn away, replaced with the admirable cast-iron lacework it now wears. Proceed to Gov. Nichols Street, and turn left, to

618-20 Gov. Nichols Street. Clay House. This is a residence built about 1828 by John Clay for his wife. Clay's brother was the famous statesman, Henry Clay. The two-story building at the rear of the adjoining garden was added after 1871 and, in the 1890's, it was used by Frances Xavier Cabrini, the religious, now St. Frances Cabrini, as a schoolhouse. At the next corner (Royal

Street and Gov. Nichols Street), to your left is a tall building of considerable interest.

1140 Royal Street at Gov. Nichols. LaLaurie House (The "Haunted House"). This is the city's most famous private residence, built before 1831 by Louis Barthelmy de Maccarty (sometimes spelled de Mascary). One of his children, Delphine LaLaurie, acquired the house in August, 1831, and it quickly became the scene of brilliant social events. But there were persistent rumors about the LaLaurie servants. In 1833, a next door neighbor told the police she

had seen Delphine LaLaurie mercilessly lashing a small Negro slave girl, who then fell from the rooftop. In 1834, a fire broke out. Neighbors crashed through a locked door into a smoke choked room and found seven wretched, starving creatures chained leg and neck in the most painful positions. A newspaper suggested that Madame LaLaurie had set the fire. Citizens began to mass outside the house. Suddenly, a carriage burst out of the gate and raced away. The wrecked house was later restored, but the LaLauries

never returned. After she died in Europe, Delphine's body was brought to the city in great secrecy and buried. Some say the house has been haunted by groans, screams and the savage hissing of whips. Perhaps you would like to linger outside this place tonight to hear for yourself. Cross Royal and enter Gov. Nichols again. On your right is

721 Gov. Nichols Street. Thierry House. Built in 1814 for Jean Baptiste Thierry. It is the earliest remaining example of Greek Revival. Go back to Royal. Turn right. On your left will be

1132 Royal Street. The Gallier House. James Gallier, Jr., was one of

people of New Orleans lived just past the middle of the last century. As you come out of the Gallier House, turn left. Then turn right at Ursulines Street. Walk one block to Bourbon. Turn left for another block, reaching St. Philip. On the far corner of Bourbon and St. Philip is

941 Bourbon Street. Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop. When this place was built is unknown. The oldest record of ownership dates back to 1772. Legend has it that this was a smithy operated by the dashing brothers Lafitte, the "hero" pirates of New Orleans. Now return down St. Philip to Royal and turn right. In the middle of the block stands

915 Royal Street. The Cornstalk Fence. The Victorian structure dates from circa 1850 and retains a cast-iron fence representing stalks and ears of corn intertwined with morning glory vines and blossoms. Across the street, and a few steps to your right, are

900-906-910 Royal Street. Miltenberger Houses. Mrs. Miltenberger built these houses in 1838. It was later occupied by her great granddaugh-

ter Audubon Zoo

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French Quarter Walking Tour



You'll love the French Quarter with all its Old World shops and buildings. You won't find anything like it, anywhere else in the world. Be sure to stop at the always-hospitable Visitor Information Center of the New Orleans Metropolitan Convention & Visitors Bureau at 529 St. Ann Street in the famous Pontalba Building! Because New Orleans is located in a crescent of the mighty Mississippi River, (hence the nickname, "the Crescent City"), directions are often referred to as Lakeside (North), Riverside (South), Downtown (East), and Uptown (West), and watch for the many one way streets.

Presbytere, Pere Antoine's Alley. Cut in 1831, this passage was given the official name, Ruelle d'Orleans, Nord, or Orleans Walkway, North, a twin to Ruelle d'Orleans, Sud (see No. 16). Follow this passage to its farther end (Chartres Street). As you emerge, turn left. The large gray building with the iron fence in its arches is

The Presbytere. In 1791 Don Andres Almonester y Roxas began construction of what he, a Spaniard, called the Casa Curial. In French, it is Presbytere, or residence for the clergy serving the parish church. The U.S. took over the Territory in 1803, and completed the building in 1813.

It never served as either Casa Curial or Presbytere. In 1853, the city purchased the Presbytere from the wardens of the Cathedral, and is now part of the Louisiana State Museum. As you face the front of the Presbytere, to your left is the "St. Louis Cathedral. This is the oldest cathedral in the United States and the third church on this site. The present church dates from 1849-51. It was constructed to the specifications of the architect J.N.B. de Pouilly. The first two had been

Jackson Square

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Jackson Square

Pontalba Buildings. Micaela Almonester de Pontalba, the daughter of the colony's richest man in the Spanish period, Don Andres Almonester y Roxas, built the great twin buildings which bear her name, as luxury apartments and fine ground floor offices and shops. Work was begun in 1840 on the 16 row houses and completed in 1849. The almost identical row on the opposite side of Jackson Square was finished in 1851. In the middle of the Pontalba Building on St. Ann Street is

525 St. Ann Street. 1850 House. Here a three-story section of one of the two Pontalba Buildings has been beautifully restored to present a typical New Orleans dwelling of 1850. Furnished in authentic New Orleans furniture of the mid-nineteenth century. As you leave the 1850 House, go

to your left on St. Ann. At the first corner (Decatur Street), that long, low structure across the street is part of

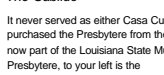
The French Market. Its buildings have been a vibrant part of the New Orleans scene for more than 165 years. The French Market is anchored at its down river end by the popular farmer's market areas of long open sheds filled with fresh fruits and vegetables. Long-time shopkeepers, many new shops, fine restaurants, bistros, coffee stands, craft stalls; and a galaxy of shopping pleasures are offered for the entire family. Continue down Decatur Street to Ursuline Street.

Old Ursulines Convent

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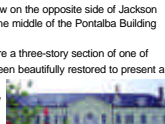
The Cabildo



Jackson Square



Jackson Square



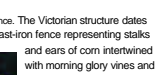
Old Ursulines Convent



Old Ursulines Convent



New Orleans Museum of Art



New Orleans Museum of Art



Audubon Zoo

