

# LOUISIANA COOKIN'

Authentic Cajun & Creole Cuisine

2017

TRAVEL  
ISSUE



BEST-EVER  
*Queen*  
CAKE

CELEBRATE MOM *with*  
*this* ELEGANT TREAT

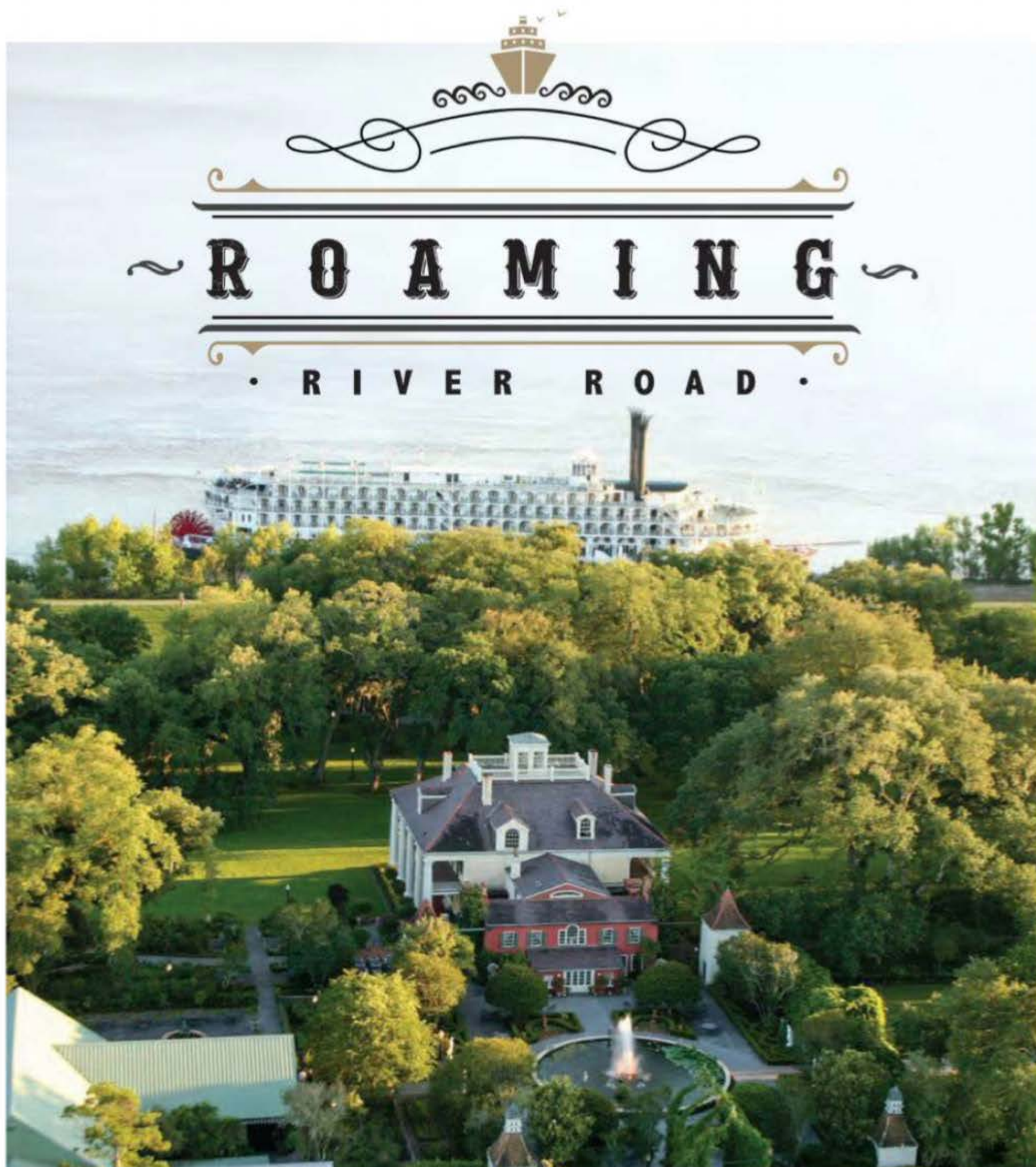
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DISPLAY UNTIL JUNE 27, 2017





by caitlin watzke

**A**long the winding stretch of River Road between New Orleans and Baton Rouge lies Plantation Country, a beautiful region that provides a glimpse into Louisiana's past. This National Scenic Byway along the Mississippi River is dotted with ten historic plantation homes, where tours promise unforgettable experiences that take visitors back in time to learn about the way of life for the families who owned the homes and the slaves who built them. This historically significant area also offers one-of-a-kind cultural experiences and authentic Cajun and Creole eateries, all amid a spectacular landscape.



## Plantations

Some of America's most famous plantation homes are nestled along River Road, but it is their unique histories that make each of them worth visiting. Start your trip with a tour of **Whitney Plantation** in Wallace, the only plantation museum that focuses solely on slavery. The 90-minute guided tour gives visitors perspective on the lives of Louisiana's enslaved people. Tours include visits to the "Big House," seven slave cabins, the Antioch Baptist Church, and the Wall of Honor, a memorial dedicated to the people who were enslaved at the plantation.

Formerly known as *l'habitation Duparc*, **Laura Plantation** may feature the most thorough presentation of Creole plantation life, due to the account penned by Laura Locoul Gore, the granddaughter of the original owners, in her memoir *Memories of the Old Plantation Home: A Creole Family Album*. Guided tours, which are offered in English and French, include visits to the restored Creole plantation house, gardens, and the



1840s slave cabins, where the Senegalese tales of Br'er Rabbit (or Compère Lapin) were first recorded by Tulane University language professor Alcée Fortier.

Perhaps no River Road plantation is more recognizable than **Oak Alley**, with its iconic quarter-mile approach of stately 300-year-old oaks leading up to "The Big House," which was built in the Greek Revival style in 1837 as a gift from a wealthy Creole sugar planter to his bride. Today, the 25-acre National Historic Landmark site offers daily guided tours of the Big House and self-guided walking tours of the historic grounds. Don't forget to try one of their famous Mint Juleps.

The oldest documented plantation left in the lower Mississippi Valley, **Destrehan Plantation** is a French Colonial-style house that was built in 1787 by Charles Paquet, a free man of color whose craftsmanship is evident throughout the home. Set among a backdrop of Spanish moss-draped oak trees, Destrehan offers historical tours led by guides in period dress. Tours include access to the 1811 Slave Revolt Exhibit, folk life demonstrations, and the Jefferson Room, which houses an authentic document signed by Thomas Jefferson.

Known as the "Crown Jewel of Louisiana's River Road," **Houmas House Plantation and Gardens** offers a view into the life of the wealthy sugar barons that once





lived there. The self-guided tour allows time to explore 38 acres of lush gardens with sitting areas for you to enjoy the splendor of the season.

It is well worth scheduling tours of the other five plantations in the area, including St. Joseph, San Francisco, Ormond, Evergreen, and Poché.

## Dining



If you've worked up an appetite after walking around these historic grounds, you're in the right place. This is South Louisiana after all, and whether you're in the mood for fresh Gulf seafood or Cajun smoked meats, Plantation Country has something for everyone.

After your tours of Houmas House and Oak Alley, sit a spell for a meal that you won't soon forget. At Houmas House, dine in style at **Latil's Landing Restaurant** or the **Carriage House Restaurant**, or stop in at **Café Burnside** for a relaxed lunch. **Oak Alley Restaurant** offers traditional Cajun and Creole dishes, including po' boys, gumbo, and crawfish étouffée, while the **Plantation Café** serves quick bites like wraps, salads, and ice cream.

Next to Laura Plantation is **B&C Seafood Riverside Market & Cajun Restaurant**, where the Breaux family serves home-style seafood dishes and Cajun delicacies,



1. Destrehan Plantation 2, 3. Houmas House Plantation and Gardens  
4. Laura Plantation 5. Whitney Plantation 6. Laura Plantation





1, 2. Nobile's Restaurant & Bar 3. Frenier Landing Restaurant & Oyster Bar

including boudin balls, frog legs, gumbo, and fried seafood platters. Stop by the market on your way out for smoked sausage or freshly fried cracklin's.

Across the river in Lutchter is **Nobile's Restaurant & Bar**, which has been around since the lumber boom of the 1890s. Today, Nobile's specializes in traditional River Road cuisine that draws locals and visitors alike to the restaurant on Main Street. Don't leave without trying the Butter Beans & Shrimp with Fried Thin-Cut Fish or the famous meringue-topped Ba Ba dessert.

With smokehouses throughout the city turning out some of the most delicious traditional smoked sausage Louisiana has to offer, LaPlace has rightfully earned the title of "Andouille Capital of the World." **Wayne Jacob's Smokehouse Restaurant** has made some of the spiciest Andouille in town for more than 65 years. Dine in the restaurant for a taste of classic Cajun and Creole dishes, including one of our new favorites: deep-fried Andouille chips with Creole mustard. Pick up some of Wayne Jacobs' famous Andouille, boudin balls, or hot sauce from the smokehouse before you leave.

For fresh Louisiana seafood with a view, **Frenier Landing Restaurant and Oyster Bar** in LaPlace is the place to be. The waterfront restaurant serves a mouthwatering variety of classic seafood dishes, including charbroiled oysters, fried shrimp po' boys, crab cakes, and an impressive whole stuffed flounder. Friday

and Saturday nights are especially fun with live music in the restaurant bar.

For truly indulgent Southern comfort food, **Truck Farm Tavern** in St. Rose is a must. Here, Chef Scott Bourgeois turns out playful takes on Southern classics, like his River Road BBQ Shrimp with house-made Worcestershire sauce; BBQ Mac and Cheese with pulled pork, smoked chicken, and brisket; and Crispy Chicken Liver Biscuits with bacon, fruit preserves, and smoked onion gravy.

## What to Do ➡

Get up close and personal with Louisiana's wetlands on a swamp tour from **Cajun Pride**, where there's no telling what kind of wildlife you'll see. During the summer months, when the bayou waters are warm, the wetlands are teeming with gigantic alligators that will swim right up to the pontoon boat in exchange for marshmallows. Each swamp tour is led by one of Cajun Pride's captains, whose knowledge of the swamp and playful personalities keep guests captivated.

Take a journey through African American life and music at **Historic Riverlands Church** in Reserve, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and Louisiana's African American Heritage Trail. Formerly called Our Lady of Grace, the Roman Catholic church was built in 1936 exclusively for African American parishioners, who





1. Wayne Jacob's Smokehouse 2. Historic Riverlands Church 3. The Inn at Houmas House 4. Cajun Pride Swamp Tours' sighting

previously worshipped at the segregated St. Peter's Church. Visits must be scheduled in advance and include a tour of the church and the Soul River exhibit, which highlights the influence of African Americans on music throughout hundreds of years.

## here to Stay ➔

Several of the plantations in the area have a variety of onsite accommodations available for visitors. Check into one of the cottages at **The Inn at Houmas House** for a luxurious getaway, complete with breakfast and a tour of the mansion. Each cottage is decorated with antiques and artwork that reflect the style of the mansion. Relaxation is the name of the game at **Oak Alley**, home to eight cottages featuring the comforts of home. Settle in for the night with an in-room dinner prepared by the restaurant's chefs. **Ormond Plantation's Bed & Breakfast** is unique in that it is located inside the plantation home, where guests may enjoy the grounds. ♣

## FESTIVALS

**JUNE 23-25**

LOUISIANA CATFISH FESTIVAL  
louisianacatfishfestival.com

**OCTOBER 13-15**

ANDOUILLE FESTIVAL  
andouillefestival.com

**DECEMBER 8-10**

FESTIVAL OF THE BONFIRES  
festivalofthebonfires.org