



GROUP TOURS – CAJUN COUNTRY ONE-DAY TOURS

Cultural Tour

Begin the morning with a tour of the International Petroleum Museum & Exposition, the "Mr. Charlie," the first submersible oil rig. Learn about the history of the oil industry, the role "Mr. Charlie" played and the future of the oil and gas industry. While in the downtown area, enjoy a walking tour of the Morgan City Historic District. Get a bird's-eye view of the Atchafalaya River on top a 21-foot seawall. Go shopping along the Front Street area, or visit Trinity Episcopal Church, one of the oldest churches in Morgan City. For lunch, eat at one of our local seafood restaurants. After lunch, travel to Charenton to tour the Chitimacha Museum and learn about the history of the Chitimacha Native Americans. Return to Morgan City and enjoy dinner and/or a cooking demonstration. The next day, travel to Franklin and enjoy a sugar cane field tour. Learn how sugar cane is planted, the growing season and the harvesting of sugar cane.

Nature- Based Tour

For early risers, enjoy a walk around Lake End Park, where you'll get an unobstructed view of Lake Palourde. Travel to the Brownell Carillon Bell Tower, a 10-acre swamp park where you can walk the trail, sit and listen to the sounds of the swamp and Carillon bells while viewing wildlife, or travel to Four Mile Bayou Road for a scenic view. After lunch, travel to Bayou Teche National Wildlife Refuge near Franklin where you'll see egrets, turtles, flora and fauna and possibly a gator. After your tour, enjoy dinner at one of the many seafood restaurants located throughout the Cajun Coast or enjoy a cooking demonstration.

Preservation

Preservationists won't want to miss Franklin, described as one of the prettiest Louisiana towns by Lyle Saxon in *Old Louisiana*. A knowledgeable step-on guide from the Landmarks Society will tell you all about this stunning English town that boasts over 400 noteworthy properties, many listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Make up your own tour from a list of public homes open daily or churches opened especially for your group. For lunch, enjoy a gourmet picnic basket at one of the homes. Mix the tour with a walking tour of the historic district or shopping down Main Street, where merchants will greet your guests with discounts and goodies. After a full day of touring and shopping, enjoy a wine and cheese party at a historic home. For dinner enjoy eating at one of the local seafood restaurants.

Overnight in Franklin/Morgan City.

Civil War

St. Mary Parish played an integral role in the War Between the States because of its strategic location next to the Atchafalaya River and Bayou Teche. Visit the sites of Fort Starr (also known as Fort Brashear), Fort Buchanan, Fort Bisland, the Battle of Bisland and the Battle of Irish Bend. See the bell from the gunboat Diana at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, the Civil War Room at Grevemberg House Museum or visit the Young Sanders Center for the Study of the War Between the States.

Fairs & Festivals

Louisiana has hundreds of fairs and festivals throughout the year where you and your guests can experience Cajun *joie de vivre* (joy of life).

Late August/ Early September

Labor Day weekend offers a top-rated festival in Cajun Country. Enjoy the **Louisiana Shrimp & Petroleum Festival**, named the best festival in Louisiana (50,000 plus attendance category) by the Louisiana Fairs & Festivals Association. Also named a Top 20 Southeast Tourism Society event and a top 100 American Bus Association event, the festival features over 16 great events. Attend Mass in the Park, the historic Blessing of the Fleet and boat parade, street parade, music, arts and crafts and lots more.

February

The **Eagle Expo** is a tribute held each February to the return of the American Bald Eagle to Louisiana, which was removed from the endangered species list in June 2007. The Eagle Expo features boat tours to view eagles, seminars and more.

March/ April

The **Cypress Sawmill Festival** is held every first weekend in April. This festival is a family festival featuring professional lumberjack shows, chainsaw carving, a cypress sawmill display, numerous tournaments, a *passé partout* (two-person saw) contest, arts and crafts, Classic Car & Truck show, a street fair with rides and games, a Gumbo cook-off and food and drink booths. The **Bayou Teche Black Bear Festival** is full of traditional events such as great music and food, arts and crafts, educational activities and fireworks over beautiful Bayou Teche. The Running of the Bears 5K Run/Walk, the Bear-y-Patch Educational Area, Black Bear Obstacle Course, and the Cub Club children's area. Running in conjunction with the Bayou Teche Black Bear Festival is the **Bayou Teche Wooden Boat Festival**. Held the same weekend in April, the Wooden Boat Show features a collection of antique and newly built watercraft on display along the scenic Bayou Teche in downtown Franklin.

July

The **Bayou BBQ Bash**, held in July, is an International Barbecue Cookers Association competition also featuring arts and crafts booths, live music, an ATV and classic car show, kids' barbecue competition and more.

October

The **Harvest Moon Fest** is a community-based downtown street festival celebrating the sugar cane harvest and the return of fall. Events include live entertainment, children's activities, arts and crafts, a 5k run/walk, an antique hot-rod, classic car and motorcycle show, bass fishing tournament, a BBQ cook-off, and more.

Mardi Gras on the Cajun Coast

Mardi Gras is celebrated throughout South Louisiana.

Friday prior to Mardi Gras

- Arrive in Morgan City
- Spend the morning on a special shopping tour of local boutiques
- Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant
- Tour Morgan City Downtown
- Attend the Krewe of Adonis Parade lineup. Photo opportunity
- View the Krewe of Adonis Parade
- After parade, enjoy dinner at a local seafood restaurant.

Saturday prior to Mardi Gras

- Head to Franklin and tour Oaklawn Manor and Grevemberg House or stay in Morgan City and tour downtown Morgan City and the "Mr. Charlie" Oil Rig Museum
- Lunch at a local restaurant
- View Krewe of Dionysus Mardi Gras Parade
- Attend the Krewe of Hephaestus Court & Ball presentations.

Sunday prior to Mardi Gras

- Attend Krewe of Galatea Mardi Gras Parade.

Christmas on the Cajun Coast

Tis the season to be jolly - and what better way to enjoy the season than on the Cajun Coast. Tour stunning plantation homes beautifully decorated for the holiday season including Grevemberg and Oaklawn Manor. Experience Christmas under the Lampposts in Franklin, Morgan City's annual Christmas Festival and local parades. See beautiful Christmas lights at Kemper Williams Park in Patterson and in historic downtown Franklin.

Birdwatching and Wildlife Photography

Pick up a copy of the *America's Wetland Birding Trail on the Louisiana Great Gulf Coast* brochure. The brochure highlights 11 sites along the Cajun Coast that are great for birding and wildlife watching. In January and February, view the American bald eagle. The Bayou Teche National Wildlife Refuge is a great place for birding and wildlife watching. The 9,028-acre refuge is forested with bottomland hardwoods and cypress-gum forests. The American alligator and the Louisiana black bear are often seen throughout the refuge. Other wildlife species of interest that can be found on the refuge include wading birds, ducks and bald eagles.

Stained Glass Church Tour

Spend the day touring three local churches, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Trinity Episcopal Church and Church of the Assumption. All three churches are steeped in religious history, full of unique architecture and adorned with beautiful stained glass windows.

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH, dating back to the 1850s has one of the rarest structures in the country. The church has a European-style baptistery, fashioned after the Roman bathhouses of centuries ago and the building is a Gothic church structure complete with ornate stained glass windows, comparable to those found in Europe. The stained glass, located throughout the church, illustrates various Biblical scenes as well as pictures representing the four gospel writers. It houses a baptismal font, chapel and a shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, which is also adorned with stained glass windows designed to complement those found in the church.

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH founded in 1874, is one of the oldest "congregations of

worship" in eastern St. Mary Parish. At the turn of the century, a chancel was added to the "shotgun" style church, the interior and exterior were refinished and the church was completely furnished. Native cypress lumber was used extensively with lasting results. In 1911, the church was remodeled after the old St. Andrew's Church of New Orleans and beautiful stained glass windows were included in the mid-1950s. On one side of the church, the stained glass windows depict the seasons of the Christian year and on the other side, the symbols of the miracles of Christ are represented. Also, throughout the church, musical symbols, Episcopal shields and chalices are pictured in the glass. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant and then travel to the City of Franklin.

CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION of Franklin is considered one of the most magnificent in the state of Louisiana. Designed along the simple and elegant lines of classical Greek architecture, the 1910 church features seven Romanesque columns with Corinthian capitals on either side of the interior. A plaster cast suspended ceiling of octagon shaped medallions is highlighted with brilliant gold leaf detail. The exterior has a beautiful Basilica designed twin facade and baroque gables with three arch front towers. The beautiful stained glass windows found throughout the church are of German craftsmanship and are designed to portray the life of Mary, the patron saint, as well as the Priest of the Old Testament, the Priest of the New Testament, the Sacrifice of the Old Law, the Sacrifice of the New Law and the Agony in the Garden.