

Seeing New Orleans is a unique treat...

There are numerous free — and almost free — activities around the city

New Orleans is noted for its music, and it seems only appropriate that there is much that can be seen and heard for a song Free!

The logical place to start is with the MUSIC! The music soars from street-corners in the Quarter; sings in the French Market, where week-end jazz concerts take place year-round. Each Sunday at 4 p.m. there are classical music concerts at Christ Church Cathedral on St. Charles Avenue. And you can hear all sorts of great street musicians in Jackson Square.

Jackson Square is the hub and heartbeat of the French Quarter, and has been from the very beginning. It was originally named Place d'Armes and was the center of activity for the French Creoles. Today, the former parade grounds is a pretty green park, smack in the midst of things. The fence surrounding the park is decorated with the wares of the New Orleans artists who work in the Square. And musicians in the Square play everything from jazz to reggae to rhythm and blues, while tap-dancers, mimes, and fire-eaters entertain the on-lookers and listeners.

St. Louis Cathedral. It's the country's oldest active cathedral, and it's located right in Jackson Square.

You can get a great view of Jackson Square and of the Mississippi River from Washington Artillery Park on Decatur Street. And if you want to get closer to Old Man River, stroll along the Moonwalk. Park benches on the promenade offer a ringside view of the foreign vessels, pugnosed tugs and frilly riverboats on the Mississippi.

On the downriver side of Washington Artillery Park, the French Market has been a trading center for over 150 years. The busy and colorful market is chock-a-block with specialty shops, fruit and vegetable stalls, lots of entertainment, and a flea market. On the other side of the Park, Jackson Brewery, The Mill-House and The Marketplace are on the side of a framed brewery. The renovated buildings now house a host of boutiques and eateries overlooking the Mississippi River.

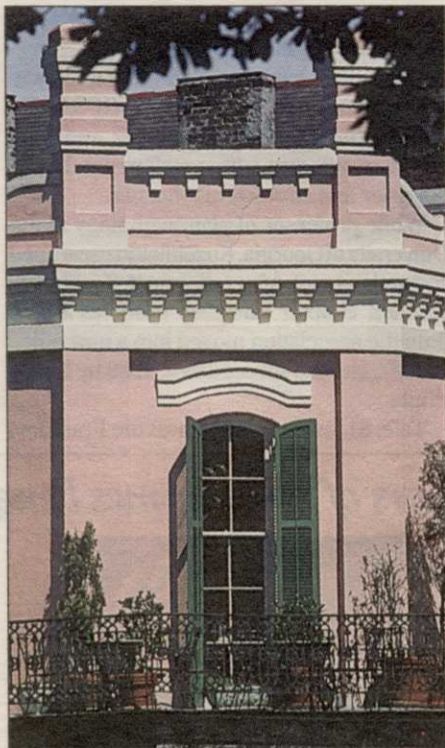
Stroll through Woldenberg Riverfront Park, 13 acres of landscaped greenspace featuring more than 300 oak trees, magnolias, willows and crepe myrtles with a large lawn and brick promenade offering direct access to the Mississippi River.

Follow the French Quarter Walking Tour, published by the Greater New Orleans Tourist and Convention Commission, and see the historic sights and sites in the Vieux Carre. The brochure also includes a driving tour that takes in some of the handsome mansions of the Garden District, which lie upriver of the French Quarter. St Charles Avenue is a lovely, tree-lined street that leads to the Garden District, and a walk or drive down First Street will give you a tempting taste of what that splendid part of town has to offer.

Park Rangers of the Jean Lafitte National Historic Park conduct free tours of the French Quarter and the Garden District. You can spend a full day browsing through the city's Art Galleries. There are 48 of them that feature rotating exhibits!

The Foreign Plazas pay tribute to four nations that have figured prominently in the city's history. Piazza d'Italia features an open-air temple and a fountain in the shape of the map of Italy; Sir Winston Churchill jovially waves a cigar in English Place; a small but dazzling statue of Joan of Arc marks Place de France; and the splendid Spanish Plaza is awash with fountains and handsome mosaic tiles.

There are many other Statues and Monu-



Its architecture is a hallmark of the city.

ments that salute the city's heroes and heroines. The Crescent City's founder, Jean Baptiste le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, stands on the corner of Howard and Loyola avenues. In Jackson Square, there is a colossal equestrian statue of General Andrew Jackson, the hero of the Battle of New Orleans in 1815. Confederate General Robert E. Lee, the South's most beloved warrior, stands guard at Lee Circle. Henry Clay, Benjamin Franklin, General P.G.T. Beauregard, and Margaret Haughery are among the host of others commemorated by statues or monuments.

There are spectacular views of the city from the Top of the Dome on the 32nd floor of the Hyatt Regency, the River View on the 41st floor of the Marriott, and from the many eateries in the Jackson Brewery and the Millhouse.

Do as the locals do and spend a refreshing day at the Lakefront, enjoying the sun, picnicking on Lakeshore Drive, and watching the sailboats on Lake Pontchartrain.

Don't miss the luxuriant Parks of New Orleans. City Park, located on City Park Avenue, is a 1,500-acre urban oasis with moss-draped oaks, lazy lagoons, hiking and biking trails, golf courses, tennis courts, spectacular Botanical Gardens, an amusement park (with a turn-of-the-century carousel!), and ample grounds for picnicking. Things are likewise lush at Audubon Park on St. Charles Avenue. In addition to golfing and tennis, the park offers a 1.8 mile jogging path, shaded by giant oak trees, and 18 exercise stations. It's also a wonderful place for relaxing beneath a tree and building castles in the air. Woldenberg Riverfront Park, 13 acres of landscaped greenspace on the Mississippi, is the perfect location to watch New Orleans' riverfront renaissance taking shape.

New Orleans Architecture is a very special treat. The French Quarter holds quaint two- and three-story structures of frame, old-brick, and pastel-colored stucco, decorated with dollops of gingerbread and swirls of fanciful ironwork. The Garden District is awash with Greek Revival, Italianate and Queen Anne mansions surrounded by luxuriant lawns. But the city has a modern face, too. The fabulous Superdome is the world's largest facility of its kind, and other modern structures include the New Orleans Convention Center, Place St. Charles, the LL&E Tower,

the World Trade Center, and One Shell Square—the tallest building in the city.

You can watch experts make the city's famed pralines, then get the recipe for this tasty candy and take a little bit of New Orleans home to your own kitchen.

...AND ALMOST FREE

The St. Charles Avenue and Riverfront Streetcars offer some of the best tours of the city. For just 80 cents (\$ riverfront; exact fare required) you can take a ride on one of the oldest continuously operating street railways in the country. View the beautiful mansions of the Garden District and Carrollton Avenue, or see the attractions along New Orleans' revitalized riverfront.

Catch the FERRY for a breezy ride across the mighty Mississippi. You'll find a whole "new" New Orleans on the other side. Ferries cast off from the Canal Street Wharf, the Jackson Avenue Wharf, and Chalmette and cost \$1.

Don't miss PRESERVATION HALL where \$3 in the hat gets you a night of some of the best jazz in the city! This historic site is located at 726 St. Peter.

A trip to explore New Orleans' many MUSEUMS is a must. The New Orleans Museum of Art in City Park houses several notable traveling exhibits throughout the year and has many fascinating pieces in its permanent collection. Admission is \$4 for adults, \$2 for children and seniors. Call 488-2631. Take a look at the exhibition gallery of the Historic New Orleans Collection on Royal Street, one of the foremost private museums in the country. For information call 523-4662.

Just \$1 gets you into the Pharmacy Museum located at 514 Chartres St. For more information call 524-9077. The Virlane Collection is another must-see housed in the K&B Plaza and open during regular business hours. The Louisiana State Museum is really many museums in one. Buildings include the Cabildo, the Presbytere, the 1850 House, and the Old U.S. Mint. For information call 568-6968. The Germaine Wells Mardi Gras Museum in Arnaud's Restaurant includes the "Queen's Collection," gowns and memorabilia of Germaine Wells, queen of several Mardi Gras krewes from 1937 to 1968. Tour the Old Mint and see a varied display of New Orleans history such as the jazz and Mardi Gras exhibits. It's located at 400 Esplanade, and you can call 568-6993 for more information.

For a wonderful view of the city and the river, ride to the top of the World Trade Center for only \$2 (children 6-12, \$1). The WTC is located at #2 Canal Place and is open daily from 9-5. For more information, call 525-2185.

Looking for an outdoor activity? Try the famous Audubon Zoological Garden. Meet the animals face to face. See the famed white tiger, white alligators, the Louisiana Swamp exhibit, and the World of Primates for a admission fee of \$7 for adults, \$3.25 for senior citizens and children under 12. The zoo is located on Magazine Street behind Audubon Park. For more information, call 861-2537.

For an up-close view of sea life, visit the state-of-the-art Aquarium of the Americas located at the foot of Canal Street. Explore the aquatic worlds of the Caribbean, Amazon Rainforest, Gulf of Mexico and Mississippi Delta. Admission is \$8 for adults, \$6.25 for senior citizens and \$4.25 for children under 12.

The Louisiana Nature and Science Center, located at 11000 Lake Forest Blvd., is another place to explore the great Louisiana outdoors. Take a walk through Louisiana in just a few hours for \$3 for adults and \$1 for kids. Call 241-9606 for more information.



Riding the streetcars is a thrill; don't leave town without a try

The city's movable museum is the oldest continuously operating street railway system in existence.

It's more than 150 years old, and the official Historic Landmark clangs, rumbles, and rolls along St. Charles Avenue, which is one of the prettiest thoroughfares in town.

The uptown route runs beneath huge arching oaks, past the handsome mansions of the Garden District, the lush campuses of Loyola and Tulane Universities, and the luxuriant lawns of Audubon Park (home of Audubon Zoo).

The original streetcar line was the New Orleans and Carrollton Railroad, which was founded in 1835 to connect New Orleans with the city of Carrollton (long ago incorporated into New Orleans).

The 35 olive-green cars operating today are Perley Thomas Arch Roof-900 Series models, built in 1923-24 by the Perley A. Thomas Car Co. in High Point, North Carolina. Each car has a 52-passenger capacity.

Once the city's only form of public transportation, the streetcar today is still serious transportation for many New Orleanians.

A true bargain at 80 cents one way, a sightseeing excursion from Canal Street to Carrollton and back is 13.13 miles, and takes about an hour and a half.

A ride on the St. Charles Streetcar is a lovely introduction to the City of New Orleans.

You can also see the sights along the riverfront by streetcar riding the "Ladies in Red." These "ladies" are seven vintage streetcars painted red with gold trim as a historical reference to the old French Market line which followed part of the same route.

Some cars are Perley Thomas and some are Melbourne W2, accessible to the disabled.

This 1.9 mile line, the first to open in the city since 1926, became operational in August 1988. It conveniently connects the cultural and commercial developments along the revitalized riverfront.

A \$14-million expansion project is now underway involving two-directional tracks, additional shelters, a half-mile extension of the line, and a streetcar museum.