

Sunday | March 20, 2022

SPRING TRAVEL GUIDE 2022

— An Advertising Special Section —

INSIDE

TOP PLACES TO ENJOY THE OUTDOORS
MUST-SEES FOR THE HISTORY BUFF
WHERE TO GET YOUR FILL OF FOOD,
DRINK AND FUN
TOP PICKS TO KEEP KIDS ACTIVE



OUR FAVORITE GULF BEACHES,
WHAT TO SEE IN LONDON *AND MUCH MORE*

THE
ADVOCATE

The Times-Picayune



THE ACADIANA
ADVOCATE

gambit

FOR THE ALCOHOL CONNOISSEUR



Visitors can tour dozens of vineyards in the Texas Hill Country. Photo provided by Texas Hill Country Wineries.



Landry Vineyards serves an array of wines for any palate. Photo courtesy of Landry Vineyards.

BAYOU TECHE BREWERY

The brewers behind Bayou Teche in Arnaudville have always made it their mission to craft beers that complement the Cajun and Creole lifestyle. Visit the taproom for unique creations like LA 3I Swamp Thing IPA, LA 3I Biere Pale Ale, Biere Joie Imperial Stout and others and enjoy a wood-fired pizza for a complete meal. Private tours and brewery rentals available. Information: bayoutechebrewing.com, 337-754-5122.

FAUBOURG BREWING CO.

New Orleans' oldest operating brewery is a true survivor. Dating to 1907, it's withstood Prohibition, two world wars, Hurricane Katrina and other setbacks, always keeping an eye on the future. Through it all, Faubourg has crafted award-winning signature beers like Blackened Voodoo Dark Lager, Golden Cypress Wheat Ale, Dat'Suma IPA and others. Information: faubourgbrewery.com, 504-867-4000.

LANDRY VINEYARDS

Since 1999, this family-owned North Louisiana vineyard has become a true retreat on 50 acres that include a winery, vineyards, tasting room, cottages and camper sites. The family focuses on wine grapes that are suitable to local growing conditions, resulting in 24 wines like dry and semi-sweet whites and reds, and port wines. Information: landryvineyards.com, 318-557-9050.

TEXAS HILL COUNTRY WINE TRAIL

It would be hard to find a better variety of wineries in a more beautiful setting than the 50-plus between Austin, Fredericksburg, Lampasas and New Braunfels. The wineries share a passion for high quality and hospitality, but each has its own personality and style. Four hosted trail events take place each year, but there are also pairing dinners, live music, grape stomps and more. Information: texaswinetrail.com, 872-216-9463.

FOR THE FILM FAN

NEW IBERIA FILM TRAIL

New Iberia and Jeanerette in south Louisiana have proven to be ideal filming locations, in large part thanks to the bayous, oak trees, historic homes and Main Streets that make any scene pop. Visit sites featured in movies like "All The King's Men," "In The Electric Mist," "The Buccaneer" and others. Information: iberiatravel.com, 337-365-1540.

AMERICA'S FIRST MOVIE THEATER

Did you know America's first indoor seated movie theater was in Louisiana? A historic marker

honors the site at 623 Canal Street in New Orleans where Vitascope Hall first broadcast motion pictures in the United States in July 1896. Information: louisianatravel.com.

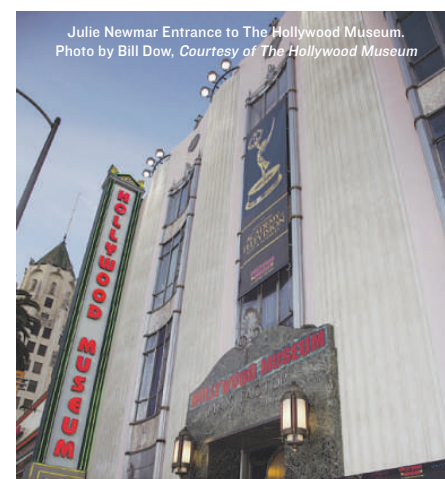
THE HOLLYWOOD MUSEUM

The official museum of Hollywood has four floors of exhibits and houses more than 10,000 authentic pieces, including costumes, props, scripts and more. Whether you're a fan of Transformers, Rocky, Harry Potter, Elvis or Marilyn Monroe, this museum is sure to please. Information: thehollywoodmuseum.com, 323-464-7776.

OZ MUSEUM

With more than 2,000 artifacts, this museum in Wamego, Kansas is a must-see for any Wizard of Oz fan. Several pieces are from the famous 1939 film, but others are from earlier silent films and "The Wiz." Popular attractions include hand-jeweled ruby slippers created for the movie's 50th anniversary, hand-painted character masks and 1939 movie production notes. More information: ozmuseum.com, 866-458-TOTO.

Lily Tomlin with President/Founder, Donelle Dadigan, with LGBTQ Real to Reel Exhibit featuring Grace and Frankie Costume Two at The Hollywood Museum. Photo by Bill Dow, Courtesy of The Hollywood Museum.



FOR THE FAMILY *(THAT AREN'T DISNEY)*

LYNN MEADOWS DISCOVERY CENTER FOR CHILDREN

Located on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the Discovery Center has more than seven acres of outdoor playing space include a weather station, musical garden and three-level Ship Island lookout with telescopes. Inside, kids can stay busy with a climbing structure, art studio, astronomy exhibit, mini versions of a TV studio and grocery store, and more. Information: lmdc.org, 228-897-6039.

MISSISSIPPI AQUARIUM

One of the state's newest attractions has quickly become one of its most popular. Visitors can get up close and personal with fish, turtles, birds, otters, penguins, alligators and more, all in Gulfport with the beach in the background. There are also special events, and space can be reserved for birthday parties or other gatherings. Information: msaquarium.org, 228-241-1300.

AUDUBON ZOO

This New Orleans institution stands out thanks to unique natural habitats like Louisiana Swamp and Jaguar Jungle, plus daily educational programs, presentations and feedings. Lions, elephants, orangutans, giraffes, sea lions, flamingos and hundreds of other animals also call Audubon home. Information: audubonnatureinstitute.org/zoo, 1-800-774-7394.

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM HOUSTON

Focused on interactive and fun education, the museum has something for all kids, regardless of age or interests. Popular attractions include a ropes course, native plant garden, hands-on science labs, a miniature city and a spy game where kids follow clues and unlock codes. Information: cmhouston.org, 713-522-1138.

BAYOU COUNTRY CHILDREN'S MUSEUM: PLAY IT FORWARD

HELP THE BCCM RECOVER!

Our Annual Play It Forward Casino and Auction night has been the most integral fundraiser for the Bayou Country Children's Museum since its inception. This year we will not only feature our one-of-a-kind cocktail trail, gaming tables, and auction, but we will also be stepping back in time with a Gatsby theme featuring a Speakeasy with a secret password that will be the "bee's knees."

MARCH 25, 2022 | 7PM – 11PM

The Foundry 715 W. 1st Street
Thibodaux, LA

bayoucountrychildrensmuseum.org



TODAY'S FORECAST



Expect widespread accumulation of indulgences

From the brilliant colors in the gardens of Houmas House, to the explosion of flavors at one of our local restaurants, from Louisiana's second largest historic district to a Sugarcane Distillery, there's just so much to see, taste, experience and savor in Ascension Parish - Louisiana's Sweet Spot.

A Mix of History and Culture | visitlasweetspot.com

NEED SOME SAND BETWEEN YOUR TOES?

BEACH TRIP OPTIONS AROUND ALL ALONG THE GULF COAST

By Amanda McElfresh | amcelfresh@theadvocate.com

If you live in Louisiana, a relaxing and fun beach vacation is just a few hours away. Whether you want to head west to south Texas or go east towards Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, the surf and the sand is plentiful and makes for an ideal getaway. Thanks to the region's warm climate and sunny skies, even a trip during the spring can be enjoyable. Here are a few locations to add to your itinerary.

COASTAL MISSISSIPPI

This region calls itself The Secret Coast, but word is getting out about the area. Quaint small towns like Bay St. Louis, Pass Christian and Ocean Springs abound with locally owned shops and restaurants, plus a steady schedule of events. Casino resorts in Biloxi and Gulfport offer gaming, pools, spas and more. Or, if you want to just enjoy the scenery, Mississippi has 62 miles of beaches for your relaxation. Information: gulfcoast.org

PADRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

The longest stretch of undeveloped barrier island in the world is located on the Texas coast, just a bit south of Corpus Christi. The

area is ideal for those who enjoy wildlife and embracing nature. The park itself includes 66 miles of coastline, dunes, prairies and tidal flats and is a sea turtle nesting ground and home to more than 380 bird species. There's plenty of activities to keep everyone busy, including biking, fishing, camping and ranger programs for both kids and adults. Information: nps.gov/pais/index.htm.

SIESTA KEY, FLORIDA

This barrier island near Sarasota has been named one of the country's top beaches for multiple years, thanks to the clear water and white sands that can relax even the tensest personalities. Embrace the Zen with free yoga on the beach, then take an electric bike ride in the salty air with Endless Summer Eco Tours and Rentals. Refill your tank with a waterfront dining experience at one of the many restaurants, then sing to your heart's content at Captain Curt's Crab and Oyster Bar's karaoke nights. Information: visitsarasota.com/siesta-key.

GULF SHORES/ORANGE BEACH, ALABAMA

With plenty of hotel rooms and

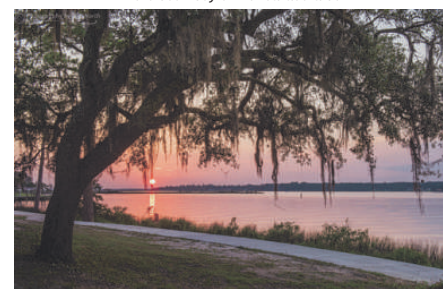
condos on the beachfront and a fun atmosphere, Gulf Shores and Orange Beach have emerged as a favorite destination for a reason. After pandemic-induced hiatuses, a full slate of events are back this year as well. The Interstate Mullet Toss and Gulf Coast's Greatest Beach Party is April 22-24, followed by Bama Coast Cruisin' April 29 and 30. The Gulf Coast Hot Air Balloon Festival is May 12-14 and the longtime favorite Hangout Music Festival is May 20-22. Smaller events and live music also abound just about every weekend. Information: gulfshores.com.

DESTIN, FLORIDA

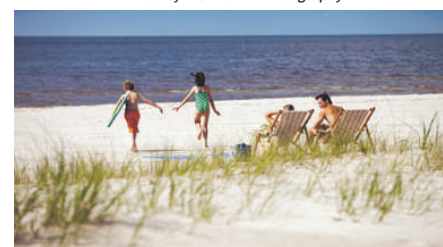
One of the things that makes Destin a go-to destination is the wide variety of activities available for people of all ages. If you can't bear to be away from the water, you can rent a boat or jet-ski, go parasailing, enjoy a dolphin cruise or take a charter fishing trip into the Gulf. If you want to explore the land just off the beach, Destin boasts golf courses, plenty of stores for shopping and a boardwalk with restaurants, boutiques, a spa and zipline. Information: destinflorida.com.



Ophelia's on the Bay in Siesta Key offers waterfront dining.
Photo courtesy of visitsarasota.com



Ocean Springs, Mississippi is a quaint coastal town.
Photo by Alex North Photography.



The beaches of south Mississippi are relaxing for all ages.
Photo courtesy of Coastal Mississippi.

BAMA COAST CRUISIN'

Bama Coast Cruisin' is an absolutely stunning show set against the backdrop of the Inter-Coastal Waterway and the Canal Bridge. It's a laid-back, family-friendly weekend full of amazing cars, fun events, entertainment and Southern hospitality.

Admission: Free to the Public

The Wharf in Orange Beach
4830 Main Street
Orange Beach, AL 36561

APRIL 29 – APRIL 30

gulfshores.com



IT'S THE *simple* THINGS...

...like watching your kids building sandcastles, spotting a dolphin pop out of the water, or enjoying a delicious waterfront dinner after a day packed with activities. Rediscover fun, food, and family on Alabama's beaches.



GulfShores.com
OrangeBeach.com
877-341-2400



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FOR THE FOODIE

HAMMOND SMOKIN' BBQ CHALLENGE

Each March, grill masters gather for a tasty competition that's also for a good cause. In addition to serving some of the best meats around, the challenge raises money for local nonprofits and has collected more than \$50,000 for charity in recent years. Competitions include the professional main event, local Backyard Challenge and a children's division. This year's event is March 25 and 26. Information: hammondbbq.com.

LOUISIANA CRAWFISH BOIL CHAMPIONSHIP

You won't find a better boiled crawfish selection than this event in Marrero, now in its 20th year. More than 60 teams will boil more than 40,000 pounds of crawfish in search of a Louisiana championship belt, cash prizes and bragging rights. Admission includes as much crawfish as you can eat. This year's event is March 26. Information: eventbrite.com/e/louisiana-crawfish-boil-championships-2022-tickets-228133151397



Tastings are a popular part of the New Orleans Wine and Food Experience. Photo courtesy of NOWFE.

NEW ORLEANS FOOD AND WINE EXPERIENCE

If you look at lists of the nation's best food events, this one makes the list almost every time. Hundreds of wineries and restaurants participate each year to create culinary experiences that combine top tier wines with innovative cuisine. Plus, the event helps raise money for local nonprofits. This year's event is June 7 to 12. Information: nowfe.com, 504-655-5158.



A vendor serves grilled hot dogs to a Taste of Chicago patron. Photo provided by City of Chicago, DCASE.

TASTE OF CHICAGO

After some time off because of the pandemic, this internationally recognized food festival is back in 2022. Food and music events will take place in three Chicago neighborhoods in June and a smaller version will occur in July. More than two dozen eateries and food trucks are expected to participate, and three mainstage evening concerts will make this a Windy City trip to remember. Information: chicago.gov/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/taste_of_chicago.html

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- California
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- Pioneer Woman (Pawhuska, Oklahoma)
- Grand Canyon
- Grand Rapids AQS Quilt Tour
- Kentucky Summer
- Yellowstone
- Outer Banks/Gettysburg
- Cape Cod
- Santa Fe

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*Proof of vaccination required for all 2022 tours.



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FOR THE BETTOR

BEAU RIVAGE

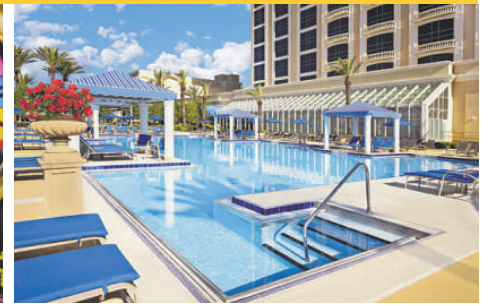
Perhaps the most visually iconic casino resort in Biloxi has packages and partnerships so visitors can have a true getaway. Hotel deals are frequently available and a mobile check-in option makes getting to your room a breeze. A partnership with Uber lets visitors easily travel to other Coastal Mississippi attractions. But, you may not want to leave – Beau Rivage has a large shopping promenade, hundreds of slots, a pool, spa and Topgolf Swing Suite. Information: beaurivage.com, 228-386-7111.

HARRAH'S CHEROKEE

This resort in western North Carolina has made multiple fan favorite lists thanks in large part to its selection of more than 3,000 slot machines, 100-plus table games and the intimate Le Fu Men gaming area that features baccarat and blackjack with an Asian flair. In addition, many rooms in the 21-story hotel have perfect views of the surrounding area. Amenities include a 24/7 fitness room, indoor pool and outdoor pool. Information: caesars.com/harrahs-cherokee, 828-497-7777.



Hundreds of slot machines are on the gaming floor of the Beau Rivage in Biloxi, Mississippi. Photo courtesy of Beau Rivage.



The swimming pool area at Beau Rivage Casino Resort in Biloxi, Mississippi. Photo courtesy of Beau Rivage.

COUSHATTA CASINO RESORT

Located in Kinder, Louisiana, one of the state's largest gaming floors is known for its slot machine variety. Last year, Coushatta won 22 Best of Slots awards from Strictly Slots Magazine, including best video poker, best progressives, best high end slot area and more. The huge resort also has eight food venues, two hotels, an RV park, dream pool and lazy river. Information: coushattacasinoresort.com, 1-800-584-7263.

HARRAH'S NEW ORLEANS

For more than 20 years, Harrah's has given visitors a true New Orleans experience. They've enhanced that with three climate-controlled gaming patios with slots and video poker, in addition to the regular gaming floor. Make a trip of it by staying in the 450-room hotel, enjoying a meal at one of the seven full restaurants and taking in live entertainment at the nearby Fillmore. Information: caesars.com/harrahs-new-orleans, 1-800-427-7247.



"Nack-A-Tish"

On the banks of the Cane River Lake, explore the oldest permanent settlement in the Louisiana Purchase. Follow the trails in Kisatchie National Forest and through the Cane River National Heritage Area to find centuries of history, culture, and natural landscapes, ready to be explored by foot, car, or boat.

800-259-1714

www.Natchitoches.com



FOR THE HISTORY BUFF



An elegant spiral staircase is seen inside a historic home in Natchez, Mississippi. Photo courtesy of Visit Natchez.

NEW ORLEANS JAZZ MUSEUM

Experience the history of jazz in the city of its birth. Located at the intersection of the French Quarter and the Frenchmen Street live music corridor, the museum features more than 25,000 artifacts and hosts more than 300 performances each year. New exhibits are always on display, with many focusing on paintings, photographs, instruments and more. Information: nolajazzmuseum.org, 504-568-6993

ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

Founded in 1565, St. Augustine is the oldest continuously occupied settlement of European and African-American origin in the United States. More than 450 years later, St. Augustine's vibrant downtown pays tribute to its historic roots. Many buildings date to the 1700s and house museums, hotels, shops and eateries, all on a bayfront with panoramic views of Matanzas Bay. Information: visitstaugustine.com

NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI

There's no place quite like Natchez to immerse yourself in the spirit of the South. Historic homes and museums invite visitors to share in the experiences of cotton barons, Civil War soldiers, slaves, civil rights pioneers, Southern belles and the Natchez Indians. Outdoor sites pay tribute to the city's history, including Windsor Ruins, Emerald Mound and four Natchez National Historical Park sites. Information: visitnatchez.org, 800-647-6724

HENRY FORD MUSEUM AND GREENFIELD VILLAGE

In Dearborn, Michigan, these two attractions make up the country's largest indoor/outdoor museum. The Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation features one-of-a-kind vehicles used by presidents, civil rights leaders and other notable figures. Outdoors, there are almost 100 buildings from different American periods, arranged in a walkable village style. Information: mymichigantravel.com/henry-ford-museum-greenfield-village/



FOR THE OUTDOOR ENTHUSIAST

FISHING IN VENICE

On the tip of Louisiana is an angler's dream, as the fish here are some of the largest in the region. Boaters can launch from Cypress Cove Marina or Venice Marina, each of which have ramps, tackle, fuel, on-site lodging and more. Those with less experience on the water should consider a charter fishing trip with one of the many reputable guides in Venice. Each marina has information and friendly faces who can make connections. Information: louisianatravel.com/articles/fishing/fishing-offshore-charter-adventure-venice

TOLEDO BEND

Toledo Bend is the largest manmade body of water in the South and covers approximately 185,000 acres. Many enjoy renting a cabin, fishing or taking part in water sports, but the area around the lake has plenty more to do, including golfing, museums, shopping and the Toledo Bend Forest Scenic Byway. There's also a steady schedule of live music in the warm months. Information: toledobendlakecountry.com



A visitor walks into the entry of Fort Jefferson at Dry Tortugas National Park.
Photo courtesy of Dry Tortugas National Park.



Snorkelers enjoy meeting the vast array of underwater wildlife at Dry Tortugas National Park.
Photo courtesy of Dry Tortugas National Park.

KISATCHIE NATIONAL FOREST

Louisiana's only national forest sprawls across seven parishes southwest of Alexandria with more than 600,000 acres of piney hills that are perfect for any outdoor adventure. There are more than 40 recreation sites; more than 100 miles of hiking, biking and horseback trails; multiple fishing areas; 10 campgrounds and open space to appreciate nature. Information: louisianatravel.com/articles/guide-kisatchie-national-forest

DRY TORTUGAS NATIONAL PARK

What makes this national park unique is that it encompasses mostly open water, along with seven small islands. Located about 70 miles west of Key West, Florida, Dry Tortugas is accessible only by boat or seaplane, creating a true nature getaway. While there, explore the 19th century Fort Jefferson, snorkel in crystal clear waters alongside coral reefs and marine life and bird-watch to your heart's content. Information: nps.gov/drto/index.htm



2022 MUSIC LINE UP

FRIDAY, APRIL 22

BRETT YOUNG

49 WINCHESTER

THE WILKINS SISTERS

SATURDAY, APRIL 23

FEATURING MUSIC, ART AND FOOD

THE REVIVALISTS

**TROMBONE SHORTY &
ORLEANS AVENUE**

MAVIS STAPLES

SAMANTHA FISH

MAGGIE ROSE

BUFFALO NICHOLS

HAPPY LANDING



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HOW ST. FRANCISVILLE IS 'SOOTHING TO THE SOUL' FOR DAY TRIPPERS AND OTHER VISITORS

By Amanda McElfresh | amcelfresh@theadvocate.com

One of the oldest towns in South Louisiana has become a mecca for history enthusiasts and others who want to take a step back in time, learn lessons from the past and maybe even connect with spirits who aren't quite at rest.

Located in the Florida Parishes, St. Francisville lies on a unique ridge that was only formed on a narrow swath of land between Baton Rouge and Tennessee. A Spanish settlement was one of the first signs of civilization, and the town eventually grew in multiple directions, especially as it became one of the largest cotton ports in the South.

Any trip to St. Francisville must include a stop at **The Myrtles Plantation**, which dates back to 1796 and is widely considered one of the most haunted homes in the country. Guided tours are offered daily of the mansion, including its 125-foot verandah, hand-painted stained glass, live oaks and more. Evening mystery tours are offered Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays for those who are particularly interested in ghostly encounters, and overnight stays are available to truly immerse yourself in the experience.

So, who exactly haunts The Myrtles? Stories abound, but the most frequent sightings are those of young girls, including a former slave who has been affectionately named Chloe by Myrtles staff. Most agree that the ghosts aren't harmful, merely curious and perhaps wanting to make new friends.

Also in St. Francisville is **Rosedown**, a former plantation whose buildings and gardens have been restored using diaries and notes from centuries past. Today, the site includes a main house and gardens and 13 historic buildings on 371 acres. In 2005, Rosedown was placed on the National Listing of Historic Landmarks. Tours and educational programs are offered on a regular basis.

In downtown St. Francisville, the community's spiritual roots are clearly evident by the numerous historic churches and cemeteries that dot the landscape. On Ferdinand Street, **Grace Episcopal Church** has been in its current structure since 1858 and has survived numerous barrages from gunboats on the Mississippi River. Also on Ferdinand Street is **Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church**, which was built in 1871 from plans by General P.G.T. Beauregard. On Royal Street, **United Methodist Church** was built in 1899 to replace an earlier structure that was destroyed during Bayou Sara flooding.

While history remains an important part of the St. Francisville culture, there are plenty of other activities year-round as well. A local artist and naturalist leads bird walks in the Tunica Hills area. **The Bluffs** golf course, designed by Arnold Palmer, overlooks Thompson Creek. The **Cat Island National Wildlife Refuge** is open for activities including hunting, fishing, hiking, photography and more.

Regular events in St. Francisville include a Jeep Jamboree in April, the Feliciana Hummingbird Celebration in July and The Southern Garden Symposium in October.

For more information on all that St. Francisville has to offer, visit www.stfrancisville.net/.

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MUSEUM

www.africanamericanmuseum.org

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EASIER TRAVEL AND 2022 SAINTS GAME: TWO REASONS TO ADD LONDON TO YOUR BUCKET LIST

British Airways has resumed nonstop flights between New Orleans and London, making it easier than ever to head across the Atlantic. Meanwhile, the New Orleans Saints will play a game in London next season, with the date and opponent to be announced.

When in London, there are some must-see attractions, starting with **The British Museum** that has about 80,000 objects on display in organized exhibits. The museum is free to visit, although there are costs for guided tours and audio guides.

Buckingham Palace is as close as most of us will get to royalty. Most of the palace is open for tours during the summer and parts of spring and winter. Visitors can see the 19 State Rooms where official affairs and ceremonies take place. Multimedia guides are included with admission and provide a history of each room. **Westminster Abbey** will be a



Beautiful aerial panoramic view of the Hyde park in London, United Kingdom. Photo by Getty Images.



Westminster Abbey (built 1045–1050), the ancient cathedral used for British Coronations and Royal Weddings. Photo by Getty Images.

familiar sight to many visitors, as the medieval church has been the site of multiple royal weddings and coronations. It's usually busy, so plan ahead and decide which areas you most want to see. Multimedia guides are included in the price of admission and guided tours that take visitors to special areas are available.

If you need fresh air and open spaces, look no further than Hyde Park and **Kensington Gardens**. The 350 acres of Hyde Park include foot and bike paths, beautiful scenery, the peaceful Serpentine Lake and the moving Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fountain. Meanwhile, many visitors laud the tranquility of Kensington Gardens with its Albert Memorial, Italian Gardens and Peter Pan Statue.

In addition to these attractions, there is live theater, other Royal Parks and additional museums. Go to visitlondon.com for more.



Plan Your Escape...

As the world opens back up, our friendly AAA Travel Advisors in Louisiana can help you plan a getaway to Hawaii with Pleasant Holidays or a cruise from the Port of New Orleans! Plus, ask about savings to other tropical destinations like Mexico and the Dominican Republic. But book early as space availability may be limited.

Call or visit your nearest AAA Travel office today or click on AAA.com/travel

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504-838-7500

Baton Rouge
5454 Bluebonnet Blvd.
225-293-1200

Covington
808 N. Highway 190
985-809-2800



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in your
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In Lafayette, Spring is a good time to dance. We have a lot of things to celebrate - the food, the people, the days we spend together - Come on over, we'll teach you how to two-step.

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LafayetteTravel.com/Spring 800 346 1958