

Annual Festivals & Events

Mardi Gras – Held in historical Le Vieux Village, Lundi Gras at the Village offers a unique rural village setting along with live entertainment and great food the Monday before Fat Tuesday. On Mardi Gras Day, the Half-Fast Krewe of Frank's Parade rolls through the historic downtown district at 11 a.m. Call: 800-424-5442.

Music & Market – This public outdoor event celebrates the spring and fall bounties of fresh, homegrown produce with local musical talents. Held Fridays 5:30 – 8:30. Call: 800-424-5442.

Zydeco Extravaganza – This 25-year old celebration pays homage to the Creole and zydeco music culture featuring a day-long lineup of zydeco entertainment. Held the Sunday before Memorial Day at Evangeline Downs. Call: 337-234-9695. Web: www.zydecoextra.com.

Opelousas Spice and Music Festival – Spice it up in historic Opelousas the first weekend in June! Features Cajun and Creole food, and Cajun, zydeco, swamp-pop and other music genres. Call: 800-424-5442.

The **Juneteenth Folklife Celebration**, an African-American cultural celebration highlighting the rich heritage and contributions of Southwest Louisiana is held the Saturday before Father's Day. It includes folk art demonstrations, music, liturgical dance and more. Call: (337) 945-5064.

Opelousas is the **Zydeco Music Capital of the World** and the **Original Southwest Louisiana Zydeco Music Festival** is held each Labor Day weekend. Call: 337-942-2392. Web: www.zydeco.org

Cemetery Tours: Voices from Our Past – Held the second and third weekends in October, local actors bring historical characters to life. Call: 337-942-8318.

Louisiana Yambilee – Created in 1946, this festival celebrates the sweet potato during the last full week in October. Complete with food, music, pageants, a carnival and a grand parade. Call: 337-948-8848. Web: www.yambilee.com.



Holy Ghost Creole Festival – Held first full weekend in November, this festival celebrates the Creole culture. Call: 337-948-2732.

Christmas in Old Opelousas – A month-long celebration of Christmas with the lighting of the Nativity Scene on the Court House Square, Christmas Parade, city-wide holiday decorations, holiday tour of homes and much more. December 1 – 31. Web: www.cityofopelousas.com.

Christmas at the Village – Annual lighting of the village complete with Christmas carols and a visit from Papa Noël! First Friday in December. Call: 800-424-5442.

Opelousas Little Theatre – Year-round quality productions. Web: www.opelousaslittletheatre.com.

Our Heritage

Visit Opelousas and discover that it's our unique culture, our rich history and our *Joie de Vivre* that makes us Louisiana's authentic Cajun and Creole experience!

Opelousas, Louisiana's **third oldest City**, was established by the French in 1720. In 1765, the **Acadians** (Cajuns) arrived in the Opelousas area and the Spanish established a garrison here in the mid-18th century. A strong **Creole** influence can still be felt in this old city.



Jim Bowie, famed hero of the Alamo, lived in Opelousas before moving to Texas to join the fight for Texas independence.

Opelousas became the capital of Confederate Louisiana for almost a year in 1862, and the city has the oldest remaining **Governor's Mansion** in the state.

The cultural mosaic here produced the exotic and south-after **Cajun** and **Creole** dishes like etouffee', jambalaya, boudin and cracklins. You can dine where world-famous chefs Paul Prudhomme, Tony Chachere and Eula Savoie learned their culinary skills. After dinner, put on your dancing shoes and move to the beat of zydeco, **Cajun** or **swamp pop** at our many music venues and dance halls. Here, our heritage is celebrated every day!



Take a step back in time, step into a culinary experience or dance the two-step. Whatever your taste, Opelousas is...

Perfectly Seasoned.



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Get the free mobile app at <http://gettag.mobi>

Email us: tourism@cityofopelousas.com



Discover Louisiana's Third Oldest City

Just 20 minutes north of Lafayette on I-49

Toll Free: 800-424-5442

www.cityofopelousas.com

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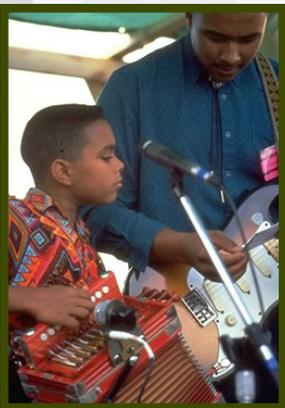
Toll Free: 800-424-5442

Attractions

✿ **The Opelousas National Historic District**, located in the heart of *Old Opelousas*, showcases nearly 175 years of architecture and ranges from Greek Revival to Art Deco. Visit the over 300 year old Jim Bowie Oak or stroll down brick sidewalks dating back to the early 1800s while exploring Antebellum and Victorian homes. Stop by the visitor's center for a free driving and walking map!



✿ **Opelousas Museum & Interpretive Center** – This museum showcases various objects and artifacts relating to the history and culture of the city. Learn about the Native Americans, Cajuns, Creoles, and the French and Spanish. Discover the area's important role during the Civil War and learn about famous Opelousas residents such as Olympic gold medalist Rodney Milburn and Grammy Award winner Clifton Chenier. Call 337-948-2589.



✿ **Creole Heritage & Folklife Center** – Learn about the rich heritage of the Creole people in Southwest Louisiana. The Center showcases everything from food and festivals to art and crafts. Call: 337-945-5064.

✿ **Le Vieux Village** – French for the *Old Village*, this historical park and museum is a collection of buildings from Opelousas and St. Landry Parish dating from the 1700s to the early 20th century. The village includes one of the oldest Creole homes west of the Mississippi River and the Louisiana Orphan Train Museum. There's even a chapel for weddings. Free guided tours and info: 1-800-424-5442.



✿ **Louisiana Orphan Train Museum** – Housed in a former Union Pacific Depot, this museum honors the inspiring story of abandoned and homeless children who were rescued from the streets of New York and sent to Louisiana between 1873 and 1929. Call: 337-948-9922 www.laorphantrain.com.

✿ **Historic Michel Prudhomme House** – Believed to be the oldest structure still located in its original location in St. Landry Parish, this house was built circa 1770, and is a fine example of French Colonial architecture. During the Civil War, the home was used to house Union officers. Available for tours, meetings and receptions by appt. Call: 337-948-6506 or 942-8011.



✿ **RV Camping** is available at Opelousas South City Park. The Park features 67 sites with water, electric hook-ups and dump station. Call: 337-948-2560.

✿ **Evangeline Downs Racetrack & Casino** – Offers some of best “Vegas-style” gaming action—over 1,600 slots—and exciting Thoroughbred and Quarter horse racing around where the Cajun announcer yells, “*Ils sont partis!*” –French for “*They're off!*” Enjoy live music throughout the week. Call: 866-472-2466 www.evangelinedowns.com.



✿ **Historic Churches and Cemeteries** – Opelousas boasts of historic churches and cemeteries, including St. Landry Catholic Church, which was established by French Capuchin monks in the mid-1700s. Other churches include Louisiana Memorial United Methodist Church, Holy Ghost Catholic Church, Mt. Olive Baptist Church and Little Zion Baptist Church. Cemeteries include St. Landry Catholic and Myrtle Grove.



✿ **Historical and Genealogical Research** – Opelousas is a treasure trove for historians and genealogists. Records date back to the French and Spanish colonial periods. Documents located at the St. Landry Parish Courthouse and St. Landry Catholic Church rival those of New Orleans, Mobile and Natchitoches.

✿ **Public Art** – Around the Courthouse Square, discover some of the local treasures downtown and explore unique public art including the Acadian to Cajun Mural, Zydeco Mural, Seven Brothers Oak Mural and Fiddle Mania Fiberglass Art.

✿ **For Nature Lovers and Hunters**, Opelousas is part of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area and nearby Thistlethwaite Wildlife Management Area.

