

# JEFFERSON

Convention & Visitors Bureau



## *Media Kit*



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Mardi Gras Queen



Pontchartrain Center



Small Intimate Venues

# About Jefferson CVB

## OUR VISION

As a brand driven and destination leader, the Jefferson Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc (JCVB) is innovative and influential in bringing new visitor business to the Parish tourism/hospitality industry and host communities.

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Jefferson Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc (JCVB) is to actively partner with the tourism and hospitality industry by marketing and selling the destination brand experience with resulting additional spending by leisure and group travel visitors leading to enhanced community economic vitality and resident quality of life.

# About Jefferson

Jefferson is a diverse community sprawling the southern shore of Lake Pontchartrain and ending sixty miles later on the beaches of the Gulf of Mexico. Nestled next to our famous neighbor, New Orleans, Jefferson offers a vibrant night life, as well as the quiet serenity of a nature walk. Our communities are comprised of modern high rises, historic homes, fishing piers, Mississippi River views, marsh land, contemporary and old world restaurants, flourishing industrial parks, and family-friendly green spaces.

An area of rapid growth and business development over the past several decades, Jefferson has the ability to offer venues and accommodations to a broad spectrum.

With two major convention centers and numerous recreational facilities Jefferson hosts conferences, meetings, exhibits, theatrical performances, and sports tournaments. Attractions ranging from historical to adventurous and budget conscious accommodations provide families with a memorable vacation. The business traveler can enjoy the convenient locations of housing and accommodations to industry, still enjoying close proximity to dining, shopping and attractions.

We invite you to experience Jefferson. Visit with the locals at a fair or festival, party at a Mardi Gras parade, taste authentic Louisiana cuisine, shop the retail capitol of Louisiana. Fish and hunt in Sportsmans Paradise, hike and camp in state parks, swim and boat along Jefferson’s coast. Rich in culture, diverse in its people and steeped in tradition, Jefferson is waiting to be explored.



Houmas House



Alario Center



Louisiana Mardi Gras

# History of Jefferson

Jefferson Parish Louisiana was established in 1825 and was named in honor of Thomas Jefferson commemorating his role in purchasing the Louisiana territory from France in 1803. The settlement of Jefferson Parish dates back to the 1600’s, as seen in excavations within the boundaries of the Barataria Preserve of Jean Lafitte’s National Park. Native American tribes, including ancestors of the area’s Houma Indians, were found throughout Jefferson. French colonists began farming, soon joined by Spaniards, Germans, Africans and settlers from the Canary Islands. Later groups included Acadians (Cajuns) resettling from elsewhere in Louisiana, as well as Italians, Chinese and later Hispanic and Vietnamese immigrants.

The Parish originally extended from present day Felicite Street in New Orleans Louisiana to the St. Charles Parish line. As Orleans Parish grew it annexed from Jefferson Parish such established areas as the Garden District, Lafayette, Jefferson and Carrollton. The present boundary was set in 1874 and the seat of Parish government was transferred to the West Bank Gretna where it has remained.

# Communities of Jefferson

## GRAND ISLE

At the Southern end of Highway 1, the seven magical miles of Grand Isle hold all the wonders that Louisiana nature can offer. Oleander and crepe myrtle, palms, ferns and windblown oak trees on Cheniere ridges welcome migrating birds in season. The marshes teem with aquatic life and water birds. On Grand Isle, time slows and the visitor can savor a unique Louisiana experience.

Europeans came to Grand Isle with Spanish land grants, and by the early 1800s there were active sugar and cotton plantations. But it was as a recreation spot that Grand Isle gained fame, as visitors from nearby New Orleans enjoyed the breezes and seawater while staying in early hotels. Writers Kate Chopin of “The Awakening” and Lafcadio Hearn of “Chita” both used the atmosphere of Grand Isle as a setting for nineteenth century fiction. Today’s visitors find a thriving seaside community with petroleum and seafood industries as well as everything the visiting sportsman, tourist or camper could want.

The State of Louisiana maintains a mile of beachfront at Grand Isle State Park on the easternmost end of the island. The park looks out toward nearby Grand Terre island, once the lair of the legendary pirate (or smuggler, if you choose) Jean Lafitte and site of the ruins of U.S. Army Fort Livingston. Grand Isle State Park has a 400-foot long public fishing pier with a nearby fish-cleaning station. State officials say that over 280 species of fish are known to live in the waters around this sandy spur. The camping area of the park can accommodate up to 100 families or groups with nearby bathhouses with running water and an adjacent dump station.

## GREटना

The name Greटना, immortalized by a popular play from the last century, recalls Greटना Green, Scotland - a haven for young couples who wish to elope. Greटना captures this romantic history by offering Valentine’s Day weddings at its Greटना Green Blacksmith Shop. Greटना welcomed German immigrants to the West Bank and their story, along with the earlier migration into southeast Louisiana, is magnificently told in the German American Cultural Center. Greटना was also an important railroad center. In the city’s historic area, one can find the oldest Firehouse in America - the David Crockett Fire Company #1, complete with a museum and a blacksmith shop that recall the area’s nineteenth century heyday. Greटना’s historic area is home to several charming shops and restaurants, as well as the Jefferson Parish courthouse and other public, historical buildings.

## HARAHAN

Named for the onetime president of the Illinois Central Railroad, James Harahan, Harahan and the adjacent communities of Elmwood, Jefferson and River Ridge are pleasant regions nestled at the bend of the Mississippi River. Although primarily residential, these areas contain a large shopping center, restaurants, industrial and office parks. The AMC Palace Theater in Elmwood is ranked #7 nationally! These areas are also home to world-renowned Ochsner Foundation Clinic and Hospital, Jefferson Parish’s headquarters and the newly established University of New Orleans’ Nims Center’s Film Studio.

## HARVEY

A vibrant community fueled by its vital shipping route to the Gulf of Mexico, Harvey is a hub of activity along its port, as well as its boulevards. This community is out front continuing the effort in maintaining Jefferson’s role and position in the environmental, energy and shipping industries. Harvey is also home to numerous subdivisions, businesses, hotels, and the new Fountain Park Centre, a 20 acre commercial development with retail, banquet facilities, restaurants, and office space.

## KENNER

Named for early plantation owner Duncan Kenner, this town boasts the historic area of Rivertown along the banks of the Mississippi, the Pontchartrain Center on Lake Pontchartrain and its neighbor the Treasure Chest Casino. Science and nature exhibits, theater performances, even a NASA Prototype are among the exciting possibilities found in Rivertown. The Kenner Planetarium and MegaDome Cinema are a must-see. Kenner is home to the Louis Armstrong International Airport.

## MARRERO

This west bank community, Marrero, is home to the Barataria Preserve, part of the Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve offering bayous, swamps, marshes and hardwood forests with eight miles of boardwalks and walking trails for exploring Jefferson. In addition, Marrero is also a thriving community of neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and restaurants.

## METAIRIE

This East Bank community on the South shore of Lake Pontchartrain was once the site of the Colapissa Indian Village on the natural raised banks of a bayou along which a trail ran into New Orleans. This Metairie Ridge was ideal for farming, the name Metairie in French refers to small, leased farm holdings. Today in “Old Metairie”, Metairie Club Gardens is a charming residential area first developed in the early decades of the twentieth century. Metairie Road winds along the old trail through upscale shopping centers and new developments. Metairie also has great retail

shopping, with Lakeside Shopping Center and Clearview Mall, and countless free-standing boutiques. Metairie is home to schools, churches, hospitals, subdivisions, restaurants and an abundance of hotels.

**TOWN OF JEAN LAFITTE**

Named for the legendary pirate who once made his hideaway here, the town of Jean Lafitte is a waterway refuge rich in Louisiana culture. You can explore the bayou country, dance to Cajun music or stay overnight at one of the many inns that overlooks the marshes of the breathtaking Bayou Barataria Basin.

A thriving fishing village since the 1700’s, the Barataria region is still the point of departure for fishermen and their trawling nets filled with shrimp, crab and oysters. You, too, can experience some of the best fishing in Louisiana, whether by boat, private charter or atop Lafitte’s public fishing pier. Lafitte is an excellent way to be immersed in the beauty and mystique of Louisiana wildlife.

**WESTWEGO**

Once a passageway for pioneers headed to the Western frontier, Westwego borders some of Louisiana’s most picturesque bayous and swamps. Westwego’s adjacent 580-acre Bayou Segnette State Park is a great escape from the hustle and bustle of the city. Nestled on the banks of Bayou Segnette, the park’s extensive grounds comprise the most popular state park in Louisiana.

It is also home to the John A. Alario Event Center and Bayou Segnette Sports Complex, developed for conferences, tournaments and performance events. The City of Westwego is the launching point for several swamp tours and bayou excursions and is the locale of an excellent seafood market offering fish caught fresh from Louisiana waters.

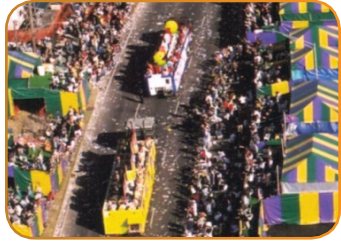
Sala Avenue is the city’s Historic District and is currently being redeveloped for the enjoyment of locals and visitors. The long awaited Westwego Farmers and Fisheries Market, opened summer 2008, features fresh produce, seafood, arts and crafts Wednesday and Saturday from 9am to 1pm. The Westwego Historic Museum is located in the century-old fisherman’s exchange building and features an old time hardware store and completely furnished upstairs living quarters with antique furniture.



Historic Gretna blacksmith



Grand Isle Beach



Mardi Gras Grandstand

*Story Ideas*

**Nature Based Tourism**

• **The flight of the Purple Martins**  
Experience one of the most unique natural habitats in America, annually April - July, when thousands of Purple Martins take cover underneath the Causeway Bridge, the longest bridge in the world.

• **Grand Isle, the Tarpon Rodeo capitol of the world**  
This Louisiana oasis becomes the center of the sport fishing world when the annual tarpon rodeo takes to the waters of the Gulf.

• **Grand Isle, Sportsman Paradise**  
Some of America’s best fishing is just off the coast of Grand Isle. The Island boasts of more than two dozen different fishing tournaments and rodeos featuring species of all kinds.

• **Grand Isle, the only inhabited barrier island in Louisiana**  
For generations the island of Grand Isle has enjoyed the distinction of being Louisiana’s only inhabited barrier island. Experience the culture and recreation of Grand Isle on the Gulf.

• **Bird Migration & the annual birding celebrations in Lafitte & Grand Isle**  
Birders can see over 170 species from songbirds to shorebirds. Experience bird watching tours, history, food and bird arts and crafts.

• **Swamp tours**  
Enter a world of timeless beauty amongst moss-covered Cypress trees on one of the many popular swamp tours.

• **Jean Lafitte National Park, Barataria Preserve**  
The Barataria Preserve is one of six sites comprising Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. This site interprets the culture of people, past and present, who settled the delta and the unique ecosystem which sustained them.

• **Bayou Segnette including the state park**  
A multitude of recreational opportunities awaits visitors of all ages--boating, fishing, canoeing, picnicking, playgrounds and, of course, swimming in the wave pool, as well) as an ecosystem that offers you the chance to spot plants, trees and wildlife from nature trails, swamps and marshland.

• **The Louisiana Iris**  
This exquisite local wildflower covers the swamps with a blanket of lavender.

• **Fishing**  
The fishing is second to none. Fishing rodeos are a great way to pass a good time. Here is a sampling: Grand Isle Speckled Trout Rodeo, Louisiana Sportsman’s Invitational, World Cat Fishing Rodeo, Creole Classic Fishing Rodeo, Swollfest Fishing Rodeo and, of course, the world’s largest International Tarpon Rodeo.

(Nature Based Tourism Continued)

• **Blessing of the Fleet**

Grand Isle, Lafitte, Westwego, and Metairie’s “Bucktown” each practice this tradition as scrubbed and decorated seafaring vessels of all shapes and sizes are blessed with a prayer for safety and a good harvest from the deep.

• **Nature Trails in Lafitte, Barataria and Bayou Segnette**

Boardwalks over the swamp get you up close & personal with nature in all its glory.



Jean Lafitte National Park



Louisiana Swamp Tour



Bayou Segnette

**History**

• **The Hurricane of 1893**

The Westwego Historical Museum tells the history of the hurricane that destroyed Chenier Caminada and forced survivors to move to Westwego.

• **German settlers of Gretna**

Settled by German immigrants in 1836, it beckons to all history buffs. Named for Gretna Green, Scotland where the blacksmith would perform marriage ceremonies.

• **The David Crockett Fire Company Fire Station**

The Louisiana Fire Museum in the David Crockett Fire Company No. 1’s 1859 firehouse, proudly displays its “pride and joy,” an 1876 steam fire pumper originally pulled by men.

• **Military Veteran Memorials**

World War I in Gretna, World War II and Korean War in Metairie, Century of Sentries in Kenner

• **Rivertown Museums**

This sixteen block historic district includes museums, a planetarium and a theater.

• **Jean Lafitte, the pirate**

In 1808 the brothers, Jean and Pierre Lafitte organized smugglers and privateers. During the War of 1812, Jean Lafitte helped defend the city during the Battle of New Orleans.

• **Adventures of Jean Lafitte Tour**

Learn the history behind the notorious pirate in the interactive museum, stroll the wetlands trace and ride through the swamps & bayous

• **Native Americans**

Before Europeans arrived, the Barataria region was home to Native Americans. Their shell middens, burial and ceremonial mounds can still be found along the bayous.



Louisiana Cuisine



Farmers & Fisheries Market



Lafitte Oyster Sculpture

**Food**

• **Louisiana Oyster Trail**

A Jefferson Parish public art program showcasing supreme oyster eateries paired with a 3-foot oyster sculpture hand painted by a local artist.

• **Seafood restaurants in Bucktown**

Enjoy some of the best seafood in New Orleans in Bucktown along Lake Pontchartrain.

• **Traditional crawfish boil celebration**

An authentic tradition is held when family & friends come together at the boiling pot.

• **Farmer’s markets: Gretna, Westwego, Kenner & Harahan Farmers markets**

Local farmers and artists showcase their wares.

• **Fresh seafood market in Westwego**

Caught and sold daily in this fantastic true seafood market.

**Sports**

• **NOLA Motorsports**

The largest go kart course in America with driving experiences, spectator racing and special event facilities.

• **New Orleans Zephyrs**

The AAA team brings baseball alive every summer at Zephyr Stadium.

• **New Orleans Saints**

Jefferson is home to the New Orleans Saints offices and training camp.

• **Tournament Players Club of Louisiana**

This premier golf course is part of the Audubon Golf Trail & home of the Zurich Classic.

• **Disc golf course in Lafreniere**

This 21 hole course featuring all grass tees is set in the 155-acre Lafreniere Park.

**Art**

• **Jefferson Parish Artscapes**

A public art program featuring sculptures located on major thoroughfares and in public parks and spaces.

• **Theaters**

Jefferson Performing Arts Society, Rivertown Theaters of the Performing Arts and MegaDome Cinema in Rivertown

# JEFFERSON

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