



[Print](#) | [Close this window](#)

Travel Postcard: 48 hours in New Orleans

Fri Apr 11, 2008 10:16am EDT

By [Verna Gates](#)

NEW ORLEANS (Reuters Life!) - More than two years after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, new cultural life is coursing through the city in the form of newly decorated restaurants and musicians returning to old venues.

Reuters correspondents with local knowledge help visitors get the most from a short visit to the city:

Friday

5:30 p.m. -- Cocktail hour comes early in the city with drive-through daiquiri shops. Try Adelaide's Cafe, home of the Swizzle Stick Lounge. The Tequila Mockingbird Martini packs a lemonade-style punch. The butternut squash soup suggests that a delicious dinner awaits.

7:00 p.m. -- Count Arnaud's daughter, Germaine Cazenave Wells, reigned over more Mardi Gras balls than anyone else, 22 in all. This royal family took their position seriously. The champagne gown of 1954 practically bubbles off the mannequin in the upstairs Mardi Gras Museum.

Below, the food and music tempt the senses at Arnaud's Restaurant which celebrates 90 years in business this year. Try the seafood with Creole roux and remember that the chefs of New Orleans are not doctors worried about your cholesterol. (www.arnauds.com)

10 p.m. -- Meet Margarita Bergen, official party girl of New Orleans. She once attended 17 parties in a single evening and now writes a column of insider events (www.bayoubuzz.com) Her Web site has directed visitors to a party in a French Quarter home where Tennessee Williams wrote "A Streetcar Named Desire."

Saturday

9 a.m. -- Brennan's Restaurant serves breakfast tailored to a New Orleans hangover: Brandy Milk Punch. The turtle soup is the perfect appetizer for the Eggs Hussarde but the restaurant's signature is Bananas Foster, flamed right at your elbow. (www.brennansneworleans.com)

11 a.m. -- The best time to visit the Audubon Aquarium of the Americas is right before the penguin feeding at 11.30 a.m. The otters and sharks eat next and a rare albino alligator might move under proper motivation.

1 p.m. -- Lunch at Commander's Palace. Start with a sazerac, reputedly America's first cocktail, or order 25 cent martinis. Restored after the hurricane, the Garden District mainstay shines with lush patterns on walls and floors. (www.commanderspalace.com)

3 p.m. -- Many fine houses dot the French Quarter. In the Hermann-Grima Historic House, return to the fashionable lifestyle of a Creole family of the mid-1800s. Back in the day, its tables included layers of table cloths, stripped away after each course, with desert eaten on bare wood. www.hgghh.org.

5.30 p.m. -- Jackson Square is full of fortune tellers such as John Martin of

the Voodoo Museum. www.voodooomuseum.com

6.30 p.m. -- For dinner, try Harrah's New Orleans' Hotel & Casino where a new local chef prepares the menu.

8 p.m. -- The paranormal is the norm in New Orleans. A man dressed as a pirate conducts a tour of Haunted New Orleans. Among the ghosts and goblins are the restless spirits of slaves tortured by a belle who held parties in her house to cover the screams. Actor Nicholas Cage now lives in the house. www.HauntedHistoryTours.com

10 p.m. -- Return to another haunted spot, Jean Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop in the French Quarter, where with enough Hurricane cocktails it would be easy to see a spook. This is one of the city's oldest buildings, dating before 1772.

Sunday

9 a.m. -- Take the rental car to Houmas House, a plantation house in Darrow, Louisiana where a woman in a belled skirt offers a tour through the pre-Civil War house.

2 p.m. -- The Windsor Court Hotel does a full service tea in the afternoons. Live classical music accompanies its British delicacies.

4 p.m. -- Pop into charming Faulkner House books in the French Quarter for something to read on the journey home.

(Editing by Matthew Bigg and Jim Loney)

© Thomson Reuters 2008. All rights reserved. Users may download and print extracts of content from this website for their own personal and non-commercial use only. Republication or redistribution of Thomson Reuters content, including by framing or similar means, is expressly prohibited without the prior written consent of Thomson Reuters. Thomson Reuters and its logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of the Thomson Reuters group of companies around the world.

Thomson Reuters journalists are subject to an Editorial Handbook which requires fair presentation and disclosure of relevant interests.