

EXPERIENCE

New Orleans' Historic  
Neighborhoods

# Irish Channel, Garden District & Central City



## NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS

### What's going down around here?

#### SPRING

- St. Patrick's Day parade on Magazine Street
- Irish Channel Neighborhood Association  
Irish Festival
- St. Patrick's Day Block Party at Parasol's
- Garden District Association Garden Tours
- Super Sunday in Central City

#### WINTER

- Central City Festival on O. C. Haley Blvd
- Preservation Resource Center  
Holiday Home Tour
- Holiday on the Boulevard (O. C. Haley)
- Mardi Gras parades along St. Charles Ave
- Zulu parade begins on Jackson Avenue on  
Mardi Gras Day

#### GO DEEPER

- For details on these and other great  
New Orleans events year-round, see  
[NewOrleansOnline.com/calendar](http://NewOrleansOnline.com/calendar)





## WE ASKED LOCALS

# What is your favorite spot in the city?

### HOWARD CONYERS

ENGINEER

Growing up in the country back in South Carolina, the only thing I heard was the neighbor's chickens...and it was very irritating. Today, the sweetest sound I hear in the air once Carnival approaches is the practicing of the Mardi Gras Indian Tribes on Dryades Street in Central City.

### ELENA RICCI

PHOTOGRAPHER

I was elated when I walked into my first NOLA apartment (we moved in sight unseen) in the Irish Channel. From the soaring ceilings to the colorful paint job to the antique fixtures, a New Orleans home is unlike any other.

### KATHERINE & TONY GELDERMAN

DEVELOPERS

Strolling on Magazine Street on a beautiful day...stopping along the way for a meal and just seeing where the day takes us. We inevitably find a new shop. It's best with hours in front of us.

### JOHN GOODMAN

FILM AND TV ACTOR

One of our favorite things in New Orleans is strolling our neighborhood, the Garden District, at dusk. The air bears wonderful scents and, whether it's a trick of the lighting at that time of day or voodoo, we always notice something we've never seen before, no matter how many times we've been down the same path.

### ELLIS JOUBERT

MASTER SILVERSMITH

Still Perkin' in the Garden District is unique in a city of many coffee shops. Familiar faces mingle with the ordinary and the famous.

### ANN HESLIN

HOUSE RENOVATOR

The Carnival parade route — from people getting their ice chests and ladders situated to the police trucks leading the parade and then, finally, the floats turning the corner. It's an exhilarating feeling.

## IRISH CHANNEL

The Irish Channel historically has been, and is still today, a diverse neighborhood filled with a charming array of residences that boast the beauty and bright colors of New Orleans architecture. Established as the riverfront of the American city of Lafayette in the 1830s, the Irish Channel Historic District blossomed into a busy area of wharves surrounded by lumberyards and cotton presses. Humbler buildings pushed out grand early residences as the waterfront became increasingly busy, although you can still find a mansion or two among the charming rows of smaller frame homes. Construction of the New Basin Canal brought many immigrants to the region, a population of whom helped settled this neighborhood in the 1830s, and the great Irish Potato Famine of the 1840s brought even more. Residents were mostly working-class



Irish, Germans, Italians, Americans and Free People of Color during the mid-19th century.

The neighborhood has significant ties to the development of jazz in the city. According to the National Register's listing of the Irish Channel as a Historic District in 1976, "The area gains its significance in music from the fact that many jazz musicians of German, French, Irish and Italian descent were born and reared here. All the members of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, the first jazz band to make a phonographic record and the first to go to Europe, were from the Irish Channel. They were...jazz immortals who helped spread jazz throughout the world."

The Irish Channel has been the center of the city's St. Patrick's Day celebration since 1809. Marchers parade between floats while riders toss cabbages, carrots, potatoes and onions into the crowd — all the ingredients revelers need to make a stew. After the parade, people linger all day in the neighborhood's bars, which have always been a part of life here, in good times and bad.

The Irish Channel was hit hard after World War II when FHA-insured mortgages were basically restricted to the new suburbs. Vast urban sections of American cities were quietly redlined, destined to decay. "Twenty thousand men went to war from the Irish Channel, but when the war ended, they couldn't get the financing to move back in," a property assessor once told preservation activist Camille Strachan. In the 1970s, young do-it-yourself renovators rediscovered the neighborhood, but the oil

## GARDEN DISTRICT



Photo— Liz Jurey

crash of the '80s ended that short boom. Happily, neighborhood revitalization picked back up again in the 1990s, thanks to determined residents and organizations like the Preservation Resource Center, whose Operation Comeback and Rebuilding Together New Orleans departments rehabilitated neglected homes, helped find homebuyers for blighted structures and assisted low-income and elderly homeowners with much-needed home repairs in the area. Today the Irish Channel is hot — it's an incredibly desirable place to live and a fun place to relax with numerous restaurants and retail along Magazine Street.

The Classic Revival mansions and charming cottages of the Garden District are famous, known and recognizable around the world. What visitors rarely see, though, is the close-knit neighborhood that keeps this historic district alive and thriving. Neighbors here know and look after one another. They see familiar faces as they stroll under the live oaks near Lafayette Cemetery No. 1 in the early morning, or when they're walking along Prytania Street at dusk. The same faces pop up daily in the Garden District's coffee shops, and at the Rink, a circa 1884 skating rink that was converted a century later into a shopping arcade. Locals and visitors can dine at world-

## CENTRAL CITY

famous Commander's Palace, or a number of diverse eateries along Magazine Street.

Settled by American businessmen, most of them "Yankees" eager to escape the Creole-dominated politics of New Orleans, the Garden District was laid out in 1832 and incorporated as the City of Lafayette in 1834. Cotton brokers, agents and financiers built fortunes in the boom years leading up to the Civil War, then established their families in elegant homes on the new city's spacious lots. By the time New Orleans annexed the area as its fourth district in 1852, travel writers had already dubbed it the "Garden District" for its spacious, showy gardens. Many of the homes were designed by renowned architects such as Henry Howard and James Freret.

In 1939, residents formed the Garden District Association, a formidable force for preservation of the residential integrity and quality of life of the neighborhood. The Garden District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971 and today is a dynamic community grounded in a strong sense of tradition, with block upon block of stunning, and well maintained, historic architecture lining the streets.

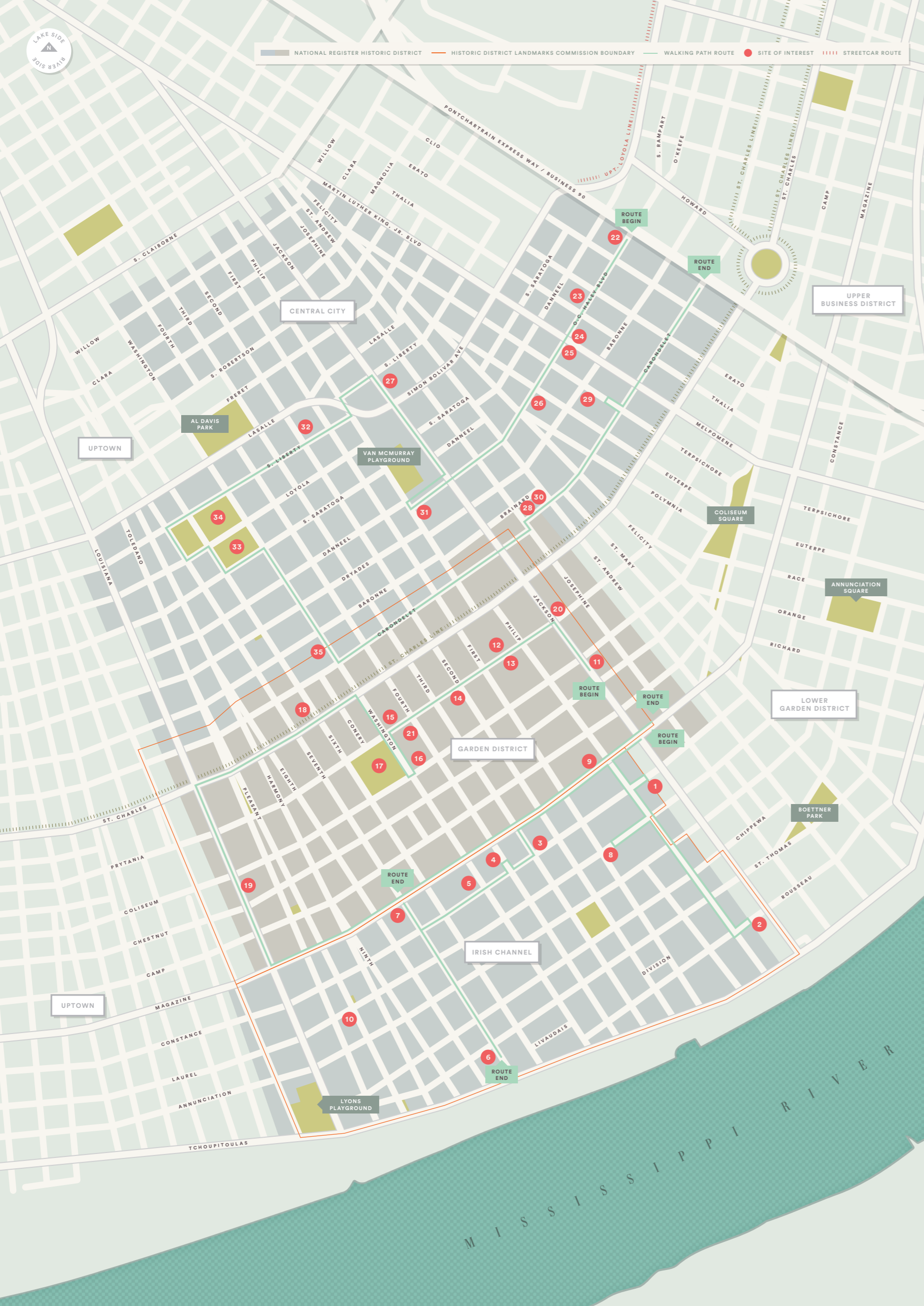
The Central City neighborhood has a storied history, much of which is honored on the streets. Part of the Central City National Register Historic District (designated in 1982) was originally included in the fashionable 1806 development by Barthelemy Lafon now known as the Lower Garden District. The swampy lands further from the river were first occupied by laborers who came to build the nearby New Basin Canal in the 1830s. Irish and German immigrants were joined by Italians, African Americans and Eastern European Jews as the 19th century progressed. By the time jazz great Buddy Bolden lived here at the turn of the century, the neighborhood was a mix of shopkeepers, porters and laborers, almost all of whom lived in shotgun cottages built expressly as rental housing, with palatial homes and townhomes nearby. Dryades Street, renamed Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard in the 1980s after the civil rights leader of that name, was a thriving shopping area with more than 200 businesses at its peak that catered to the area's ethnic populations and was anchored by the Dryades Market, one of over 50 city-operated, public fresh food markets.

Central City harbors landmarks for nearly every ethnic group that made up 19th century New Orleans. St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, designed for an Irish congregation by German architect Albert Diettel in 1869, stands down the street from a shopping district that was the site of a key civil rights protest by African Americans in 1960s. Carondelet Street boasts several historic orthodox synagogues, some of which do service now as Christian churches. First

African Baptist Church (1903) at 2216 Third St. became legendary after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke here in 1957.

In Central City, grand mansions sit next to empty lots; restored shotguns line streets that also hold mid 20th-century apartment complexes; new, modern infill housing and modern restaurants bring 21st century style to one of New Orleans' most historic neighborhoods. Some areas of Central City are undergoing a renaissance while others await further investment, but its history is powerful — as is its future.





## HISTORIC SITES OF INTEREST

- 1 **FORMER HOME OF NICK LAROCCA** 1832  
2218 Constance St  
  
House of jazz significance as the former home of the bandleader for the Original Dixieland Jazz Band.
- 2 **FORMER CITY OF LAFAYETTE COURTHOUSE** 1836  
2219 Rousseau St  
  
The best example of the Egyptian Revival style in the New Orleans area.
- 3 **PARASOL'S** 1950  
2533 Constance St  
  
A neighborhood favorite for po-boys and celebrating St. Patrick's Day.
- 4 **BOGART-LEE HOUSE** 1849-50  
1020 Fourth St
- 5 **MCCLELLAN-SCHANZER HOUSE** 1868  
1006 Washington Ave
- 6 **GRIGSON-SANDERS HOUSE** 1835  
436 Seventh St
- 7 **FORMER PROTESTANT ORPHANS HOME** 1887  
3000 Magazine St
- 8 **IRISH CHANNEL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**  
819 First St
- 9 **JOHN TURPIN HOME** 1853  
2319 Magazine St
- 10 **COTTON DAVENPORT HOUSE**  
3232 Laurel St
- 11 **TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND SCHOOL** 1866  
1329 Jackson Ave
- 12 **BRADISH JOHNSON HOUSE** 1872  
2343 Prytania St  
  
This grand Second Empire home is full of life as part of the all-girls McGehee School.
- 13 **TOBY-WESTFELDT HOUSE** 1830s  
2340 Prytania St  
  
Thought to be the oldest extant building in the Garden District.
- 14 **THE DAVIS HOUSE** 1859  
2504 Prytania St  
  
Home to The Women's Guild of the New Orleans Opera Association.
- 15 **THE RINK** 1884  
2727 Prytania St  
  
Originally built as Crescent City Skating Rink, it converted into a shopping arcade in the 1980s.
- 16 **COMMANDER'S PALACE** 1880  
1403 Washington Ave  
  
Open since 1893 and the recipient of six James Beard Foundation Awards.
- 17 **LAFAYETTE CEMETERY NO. 1**  
1832  
1427 Washington Ave  
  
The oldest of the seven municipal cemeteries with remains of immigrants from over 25 different countries and natives of 26 states.
- 18 **CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL** 1886  
2919 St. Charles Ave
- 19 **OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL CHURCH** 1894  
1307 Louisiana Ave
- 20 **MAGNOLIA MANSION** 1858  
2127 Prytania St
- 21 **CORNSTALK FENCE MANSION** 1860  
1448 Fourth St
- 22 **ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH** 1869  
1139 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd  
  
German Baroque building designed by Albert Diettel; still an active Catholic church.
- 23 **FORMER MYRTLE BANKS SCHOOL** 1910  
1307 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd  
  
Designed by E.A. Christy and restored in 2014 as a new public market and office space.
- 24 **PEOPLE'S HEALTH NEW ORLEANS JAZZ MARKET** 1912  
1436 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd  
  
Originally part of the historic Dryades Market, this building was connected to the other half of the market by a brick archway.
- 25 **SOUTHERN FOOD AND BEVERAGE MUSEUM** 1912  
1504 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd
- 26 **ASHÉ CULTURAL ARTS CENTER** 1904  
1712 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd
- 27 **EDWARD "KID" ORY'S HOME**  
2135 Jackson Ave
- 28 **LEATHERS-BUCK HOUSE** 1859  
2027 Carondelet St
- 29 **HOME OF HENRY BYRD (PROFESSOR LONGHAIR)**  
1738-40 Terpsichore St
- 30 **THE GEORGE AND LEAH MCKENNA MUSEUM OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN ART**  
2003 Carondelet St.
- 31 **DRYADES YMCA** 1905  
2220 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.
- 32 **BUDDY BOLDEN HOME**  
2309-11 Second St
- 33 **LAFAYETTE CEMETERY NO. 2**  
2200 Washington Ave
- 34 **ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY**
- 35 **ARMSTRONG DANNA HOUSE** 1868  
2805 Carondelet St

## WALKING / BIKING / DRIVING TOURS

**IRISH CHANNEL**

Start your tour at the corner of Jackson Avenue and stroll down Magazine Street, passing residences, shops and restaurants. Take a left on Philip Street and another left onto Constance Street to see the **former home of Nick LaRocca**, bandleader for the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, at 2218 Constance St. Continue down Philip Street several blocks and take a left on Rousseau to see the **former courthouse of the City of Lafayette** at 2219 Rousseau St., a "rare and undoubtedly best example of the Egyptian Revival style in the New Orleans area," according to late architect Sam Wilson. Built in 1836 by Benjamin Buisson, the Egyptian Temple features — winged solar disks above the door and windows — were added during a remodel in the 1890s. Head back up towards Magazine, but detour on your way to see the **row of late classic double shotgun houses** at 2353-2363 Laurel St. Take a left on Magazine, then veer left onto Third Street to visit **Parasol's** (established 1950) at 2533 Constance St., a neighborhood favorite for po-boys and celebrating St. Patrick's Day. Continue along Constance and take a right on Fourth Street to see the **Bogart-Lee House** (1849-50) at 1020 Fourth St. Note the fine details of this Greek Revival-style home and the unusual side gallery entered through the front door.

Get back to Constance and continue to Washington Avenue to see the **McClellan-Schanzer House** (1868) at 1006 Washington Ave., featuring a gallery that has rows of columns on all sides. Make your way to Seventh Street; turn left to see the early **Grigson-Sanders House**, an 1835 galleried cottage at 436 Seventh St. Or, turn right to see the **former Protestant Orphans Home**, built in 1887 at 3000 Magazine St. In the 1990s this building was converted into residential and retail space, enlivening blocks in every direction.

**GARDEN DISTRICT**

Put on your walking shoes to meander through the Garden District and soak up the elegant ambience. Start at the Gothic Revival-style **Trinity Episcopal Church and School** (1329 Jackson Ave.), built in 1866, whose outreach and social programs make it a keystone of Garden District life. Walk up Jackson to Prytania Street, noticing **Magnolia Mansion** at 2127 Prytania St. This home was built in 1858 as a grand residence, but has long operated as a bed and breakfast. Walk towards Uptown along Prytania Street; the Second Empire-style **Bradish Johnson House** (1872) at 2343 Prytania bustles with life as part of the Louise S. McGehee School. The **Toby-Westfeldt House** (1830s) at 2340 Prytania is thought to be the oldest extant building in the Garden District. **The Davis House** (1858) at 2504 Prytania is one of the few buildings in the neighborhood that can be rented for events. The mansion on the corner of Prytania and Fourth (1448 Fourth St.), known locally as the "**Cornstalk Fence Mansion**," was built in 1860 and designed by Henry Howard.

The corner of Prytania and Washington Street has been a gathering place since the 1880s when Clara Hagan built the Crescent City Skating Rink, now known as **The Rink** shopping mall, at 2727 Prytania St. Take a left down Washington Avenue to see celebrated restaurant **Commander's Palace** on your left, and **Lafayette Cemetery No. 1** (established 1832) on your right, filled with above-ground tombs typical of the city. Once you exit, walk towards St. Charles Avenue to admire the New Orleans' grandest street. Take a left, noticing **Christ Church Cathedral** at 2919 St. Charles

Ave. This grand 1886 Gothic building is the fourth iteration of the church.

Take a left onto Louisiana Avenue to find more beautiful homes and another impressive church, **Our Lady of Good Counsel**, built in 1894, at 1307 Louisiana Ave. Take a left onto Magazine Street to start shopping: from clothing stores to fine dining to bars, **Magazine Street** has it all. If you need to escape the bustle, wander back into the tranquil residential streets of the neighborhood.

**CENTRAL CITY**

One of the best ways to feel the history of Central City is to stroll historic Dryades Street, today known as **Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard**. Start at **St. John the Baptist Church** at 1139 O.C. Haley Blvd. (1869), a German Baroque building with a landmark gold spire and handsome brickwork. Head towards the **former Myrtle Banks School** building at 1307 O.C. Haley Blvd. to see the magnificent renovation, completed in 2014, that brought this building back after years of vacancy and a fire. Further down the boulevard, two circa-1912 buildings that were formerly part of the Dryades Public Market were reborn as the **People's Health New Orleans Jazz Market** and the **Southern Food and Beverage Museum**. **Café Reconcile**, at Euterpe Street, is a popular lunch spot that doubles as a training center for youth. The **Ashé Cultural Arts Center**, long a neighborhood anchor, transformed the Kaufman department store building (1904) into a center for art and community events. At the end of O.C. Haley is the **Dryades YMCA** at 2220 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd., a community bedrock since 1905.

Back up a block to Jackson Avenue, and take a left. The shotgun at 2135 Jackson Ave. was once trombonist **Edward "Kid" Ory's home** — Ory played with Louis Armstrong and led Kid Ory's Creole Jazz Band. The cottage was renovated with help from the Preservation Resource Center. Across the street, in front of the **Gertrude Geddes Willis Funeral Home**, the Zulu parade lines up every Mardi Gras morning.

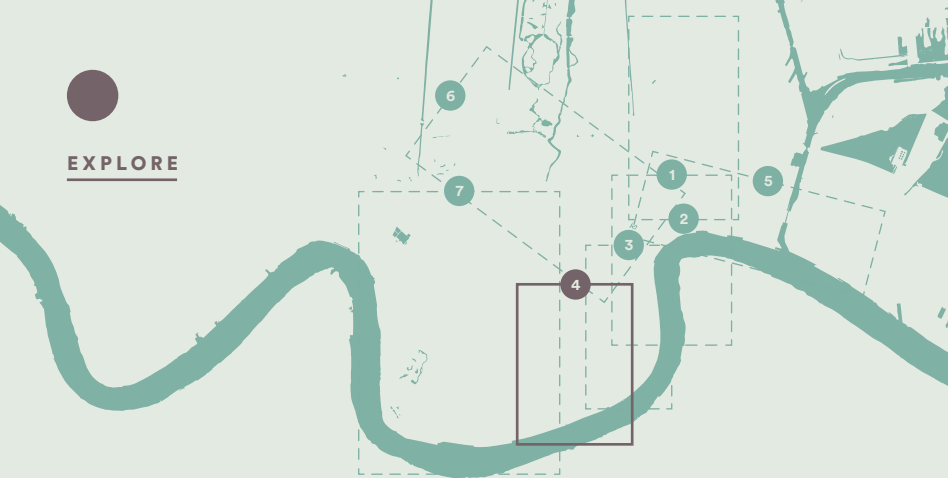
Just across Simon Bolivar Avenue is the **home of jazz legend Buddy Bolden** at 2309 Second St. Follow Liberty Street to see **Lafayette Cemetery No. 2** and **St. Joseph Cemetery**. Head down Washington Avenue towards St. Charles Avenue and admire the Italianate-style **Armstrong Danna House** at 2805 Carondelet St. Turn left onto Carondelet to see 2027 Carondelet St., the **Leathers-Buck House**, designed for a steamboat captain in 1859. Continue along Carondelet and take a left at Terpsichore to see the **home of Henry Byrd**, a.k.a. Professor Longhair, who lived at 1738 Terpsichore St. The residence, restored in 2014, houses a museum dedicated to the pianist. Continue towards downtown on Carondelet, passing former synagogues — reminders of the area's Jewish history. The **1200 block of Carondelet** is proof of the work of Felicity Redevelopment, a nonprofit that has restored dozens of historic homes in the neighborhood, including most of the buildings on this block.

**Sites in red are numbered on accompanying map. Use caution, trust your judgement and be aware of your surroundings as you explore New Orleans.**

**GO DEEPER**

Create your own itinerary, get inspired by celebrities and find their favorite places to eat, drink, and play in New Orleans at [FollowYourNOLA.com](http://FollowYourNOLA.com)

## EXPLORE



### HISTORIC DISTRICTS—

- 1 Vieux Carré and Algiers Point
- 2 New Marigny, Gentilly Terrace and Edgewood Park
- 3 Upper & Lower Central Business District and Lower Garden District
- 4 Irish Channel, Garden District and Central City
- 5 Faubourg Marigny, Bywater and Holy Cross
- 6 Mid-City, Parkview, Esplanade Ridge and South Lakeview
- 7 Broadmoor, Carrollton and Uptown
- 8 New Orleans' National Register Historic Districts

### A PROJECT OF—



923 Tchoupitoulas St.  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
Phone— 504 581 7032  
Email— [prc@prcno.org](mailto:prc@prcno.org)  
Hours— Mon–Fri 9 AM–5 PM

The mission of the Preservation Resource Center—

To promote the preservation, restoration, and revitalization of New Orleans' historic architecture and neighborhoods.

### MAPPING & DESIGN BY—

Erik Kiesewetter / Constance  
[weareconstance.org](http://weareconstance.org)

### WITH SUPPORT OF—



2020 Saint Charles Ave.  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
Phone— 504 524 4784  
Email— [staff@notmc.com](mailto:staff@notmc.com)  
Hours— Mon–Fri 8.30 AM–5 PM

New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation (NOTMC) is a private economic development corporation created under Louisiana State Law to foster jobs and economic growth by developing the tourism industry in New Orleans.

### PHOTOGRAPHY BY—

Rebecca Ann Ratliff / NOTMC  
[notmc.com](http://notmc.com)

This project has been funded in part by a grant from the Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.