

# Natchitoches has been

welcoming visitors to the heart of the Cane River region for over three hundred years. As the oldest permanent settlement in the Louisiana Purchase, its history is also a story of the development of our nation, of the challenges and successes of democracy, and of ever evolving American values. A historic downtown and friendly citizens are the setting for your visit. Nationally recognized as a Preserve America Community, a Distinctive Destination, and a Great American Main Street, Natchitoches is a genuine heritage destination.

## Cane River National Heritage Area

Cane River National Heritage Area in northwestern Louisiana is a largely rural, agricultural landscape known for its historic plantations, its distinctive Creole architecture, and its multicultural legacy.

Cane River National Heritage Area, Inc. is a not for profit organization that manages the congressionally designated Cane River National Heritage Area and works to protect, preserve, and promote the historic character and sustainability of the Cane River National Heritage Area region.

### FOR VISITOR INFORMATION: Natchitoches Convention and Visitors Bureau

780 Front Street  
Natchitoches, LA 71457  
1-800-259-1714

OR VISIT: [www.CaneRiverNHA.org](http://www.CaneRiverNHA.org)

### Cane River National Heritage Area Office

1115 Washington Street  
Natchitoches, LA 71457

Cover Art courtesy ©Cane River Art Corporation features renowned folk artist Clementine Hunter's illustration of Zinnias. Hunter used Zinnias, her favorite flower in many of her paintings of life on Cane River.



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
AND THE ALLIANCE OF NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS

**Historic Natchitoches**  
Traces of each era of Natchitoches' 300 years are reflected in the 33-block National Historic Landmark District. Giving testament to Natchitoches' unique intersection of cultures are numerous architectural styles, new and long-standing businesses, surrounding stately homes, prominently placed churches and a historic cemetery where many early leaders rest.



Cover image ©Cane River Art Corporation



**CANE RIVER NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA**



**1 Roque House**

Built around the time of the Louisiana Purchase, the Roque House is a Creole structure that, though carefully joined, contains no nails. Yves Pacale, a freed black man likely constructed the building. The house is named for its last occupant, Madame Aubert Roque, who lived there until 1941. The house was moved from downriver to this location in 1967.

**2 Bust of St. Denis**

Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, a native of Beaufort, Quebec, Canada, was the founder of colonial Natchitoches and served as an early commandant of the French Fort St. Jean Baptiste. St. Denis' leadership and diplomacy were instrumental in the success of the fledgling colonial settlement.

**3 Sompayrac Building**

Originally constructed as a bank in 1840, the current two-story brick building is a product of pre-World War II remodeling. It is often associated with the Ambroise Sompayrac family, a prominent French Creole family.

**5 Kaffie-Frederick Hardware Store**

Adolph and Harris Kaffie, Jewish Prussian immigrants, opened for business in 1863. Their store has been in this building since the 1890s. Titus Fredrick became a partner in the middle of the 20th century. The store is the oldest continuously operated hardware store in Louisiana.

**9 Deterville's Corner**

Located at the intersection of Rue Horne and Second Street, this is the only known location in Natchitoches that served as a place for selling slaves. It was named for Joseph S. Theodore Deterville, a local merchant.

**4 Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum**

The Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame's collection of portraits and memorabilia celebrate the achievements of more than 300 legendary Louisiana athletes, coaches and other sports figures. The Northwest Louisiana History Museum explores the evolution of the unique cultural traditions from early native-American civilizations to the present.

**7 Blanchard Building**

Also known as the LaCoste Building, this building was constructed in 1850. The second floor was a dancehall called the Comus Club. The building is one of two in Natchitoches that retains its original carriage drive from the street into the rear courtyard.



**6 Ducournau Square**

One of two commercial structures that include a carriage drive from the front into a rear courtyard, a feature primarily associated with French Quarter architecture in New Orleans. Damaged by fire, the building was renovated in the mid-20th century.

**10 Nakatosh Hotel**

Dating to the turn of 20th century, the original building was just two-stories with a bank on the lower level. Mid-20th and early 21st century renovations have altered its appearance.

**FESTIVALS AND FAMILY FUN**

Celebrate with us. Spring Flowers, jazz, and Natchitoches meat pies are highlights of some of our many special events and holidays. The biggest fête of all is the annual Festival of Lights, held each December since 1976. The scenic riverfront and historic brick streets serve as the backdrop for festivals throughout the year. Carriage rides, boat rides, trolley tours and streets lined with flowers and ancient oaks make every day special in Natchitoches.

**11 DeBlieux Building**

This building was constructed around the turn of the 20th century to house the post office. Since then it has had many uses including a men's store, hat shop, and hardware store. Its ornamental metalwork is notable.

**12 Location of 1866 Freedmen's Bureau Office**

Once located on the bottom floor of what was the Prud'homme family townhome on the corner of Rue Jefferson and Rue Touline; the Freedmen's Bureau assisted former enslaved individuals in making their transition from enslavement to freedom.

**13 Prudhomme-Rouquier House**

Built about 1790 by Francois Rouquier and his wife Marie Louise Prud'homme, this stood as the largest house in town. It is an impressive example of bousillage construction. The house first renovated in 1825, and recent restoration work was completed in 2002.

**14 Tante Huppé House**

Regarded as one of Natchitoches' most significant residential expressions of the purely Greek Revival style, Tante Huppé House was built c. 1830.

**15 Bayou Amulet**

Once spanned by a wooden bridge, Bayou Amulet originally drained Lake Terre Noire (Sibley Lake) into the Red River (Cane River Lake).

**16 Taylor House/ Steel Magnolia House**

This historic house is most famous for serving as a primary location in the 1989 movie Steel Magnolias. Today the house is a Bed and Breakfast.

**17 Lemeé House**

Built by an Italian contractor in 1837, the Lemeé House contains many Mediterranean influences. Alex Lemeé bought the house in 1849. It served not only as his home, but also a branch of the Union Bank of New Orleans.



**18 Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Historic Site**

The French colonial Fort St. Jean Baptiste evolved from a few small buildings used by the 18th century trade expedition led by St. Denis. An interpretive center and a replica of the fort offer visitors exhibits, live reenactments and demonstrations.



**19 American Cemetery**

The cemetery was established early in the 18th century in association with Fort St. Jean Baptiste. Many of Natchitoches' pioneering families are buried here. The oldest marker dates to the late 1700s, but the cemetery contains inhabitants of the early settlement, including St. Denis and his wife.

**20 First United Methodist Church**

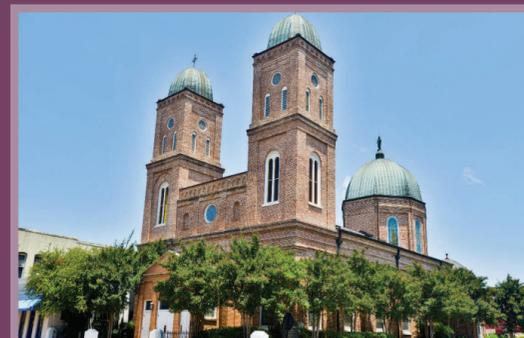
Finished in 1953, the current building is the third church to serve as the sanctuary for its congregation. The first church, built in 1880, was located on Rue St. Denis.

**21 First Baptist Church**

Seventeen members established the congregation of First Baptist Church in 1878, many years before the current building was erected in 1929. The building is a Romanesque structure with typical features such as semi-circular arches.

**22 Trinity Episcopal Church**

Natchitoches' first Protestant Church, the Right Reverend Leonidas Polk led members in their first service in the courthouse on March 31, 1839. The building dates to 1857.



**23 Bishop Martin Museum**

The Old Seminary was used to house and educate seminarians. Today it is a museum and depository for church artifacts and records dating back to 1724. It is named for Augustine Martin, first bishop of the Natchitoches Diocese. Denis and his wife.

**24 Catholic Rectory**

Built in New Orleans and shipped to Natchitoches in 1885, the Catholic Rectory displays architectural features of the Italianate and Second Empire styles, Baptismal records dating back to 1724 are housed here.

**RICH IN HISTORY**  
History is alive for children and adults alike in Natchitoches. Stories of the place and its people are told in interpretive exhibits, museum, and visitor centers. Daily tours and reenactments offer you living history firsthand. The Natchitoches Historic Trail allows you to explore the region at your own pace. Three centuries of history are revealed for you here — making lifelong learning a part of every day. Celebrations and cultural events throughout the year highlight the homegrown heritage of the Cane River community.

**25 Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception**

The current structure of the Basilica was completed in 1892. The historic parish began as a ministry to Fort St. Jean Baptiste under the patronage of St. Francis.

**26 Old Courthouse Museum**

Constructed in 1896, the old courthouse serves as the library for the Natchitoches Genealogical and Historical Association.



**27 Natchitoches Parish Courthouse**

Built during President Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration in 1939, this structure was initially built without a courtroom or judge's chambers. It is suggested that this was due to the dislike of the local judge.

**28 Old Masonic Lodge**

Natchitoches' first Masonic Lodge, originally established in 1818, was housed in this 19th century building for many years. Today the building holds Lasyone's Restaurant, famous for the Natchitoches Meat Pie.

**29 Landmarks in Time Exhibit**

The Natchitoches Events Center is home to the Landmarks in Time exhibit and contains general information. This was also the site of Fort Claiborne, the American fort built in 1804 after the Louisiana Purchase.

**30 Texas and Pacific Railway Depot**

The 1927 depot is inspired by Italian Renaissance and Spanish Revival styles. With separate entrances and waiting rooms, this is one of the few buildings in Natchitoches that demonstrates how segregation was consciously planned into architectural design.



**31 Roselawn**

Completed in 1903, Roselawn is named for the beautiful rose garden planted by its first owner, Eliza Payne Williams. It is considered one of the finest examples of Queen Anne style architecture in Louisiana.

**32 Tauzin-Wells Home**

Built in 1776 by Gabriel Buard, this is the oldest remaining home in Natchitoches. The building represents traditional Creole construction with its half-timbering and bousillage. Wildflowers in the front yard reflect the property's tradition of an informal garden.

**33 Northwestern State University**

The Louisiana Normal School, the state's first teachers college, was established in 1884. It was later renamed Northwestern State College and 1970 became Northwestern State University of Louisiana

**34 National Center for Preservation Technology and Training**

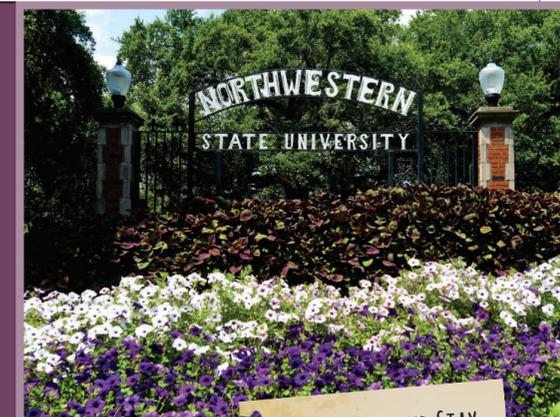
Lee H. Nelson Hall was constructed in 1923 as a classroom building and gymnasium for the female students of the Normal College. After rehabilitation efforts, NCPTT located its offices and training facility here in 2001.

**35 Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts**

This is the nation's second oldest public residential high school for gifted and talented students. The campus includes the restored Natchitoches Public High School and Natchitoches Trade School buildings.

**36 Natchitoches National Fish Hatchery and Aquarium**

The facility sits on the site of a historic Caddo village. The hatchery raises sport and endangered species of fish and includes an aquarium that houses native aquatic species and historic displays.



**SHOP, DINE, AND STAY**

Whatever the length of your stay, the city will always welcome you. Stroll streets lined with historic homes, browse for books and unique gifts in the delightful shops of Front Street. Take a break to enjoy a meal — you will find superb Louisiana cuisine in our many restaurants. End your day and start a new one in unique Natchitoches style. Our accommodations include an extensive range of bed and breakfast offerings in houses of historical significance.



**37 Grand Ecore Visitor Center**

The center is located at Grand Ecore, a community about four miles north of Natchitoches, and commands a panoramic view of the Red River. The center features exhibits and walking trail.