



Zydeco Rhythms & Bayou Bites

Real Cajun!  Real Local!  Real Fun!

VIP ST. PADDY'S PARADE: MARDI GRAS MAGIC IN EMERALD GREEN

7 Day - 6 Night Tour March 9 - 15, 2027

Don't miss this bucket-list tour, all escorted by Louisiana native Brian Doughty as he shares with you the real Louisiana most tourists NEVER experience! Ever dream of attending a Mardi Gras parade but without the big crowds and stress? Or what about actually riding in a parade and throwing beads to the cheering parade-goers on the street? TRIPS is making that vision a reality, and as our special guest you'll be treated like a true VIP at our St. Patrick's day parade! This high-octane, Mardi Gras-style spectacle transforms the streets into a sea of emerald green. Your all-inclusive experience includes catered food and an open bar, all from the comfort of your exclusive reserved areas!

We've also created a **whole Cajun Country tour** to give you our behind the scenes view of the genuine Cajun and Creole lifestyles in food, fun and music! Immerse yourself in South Louisiana's soulful rhythms and vibrant flavors, where Cajun Country charm meets the unparalleled energy of New Orleans. Here in the very heart of Acadiana you can kick up your heels to the lively sounds of fiddles and accordions as you savor smoky boudin, crawfish étouffée and spicy gumbo. Then later on in New Orleans, you'll get to explore the Big Easy's historic French Quarter and visit the amazing National WWII Museum!

Itinerary

March 9, 2027 - Houma: The Heart of Bayou Country!

Get ready to experience the vibrant culture of **South Louisiana!** Your adventure begins in Houma, the undisputed Capital of Deep Bayou Country! At the **Houma Area Visitor Center**, a local expert will introduce you to the unique sights, sounds, and flavors of **Acadiana**. Snap a selfie with the iconic 8-foot-tall **"White Shrimp Boots,"** affectionately known as "Cajun Reeboks!" These aren't just a quirky landmark, they're the essential waterproof footwear of the hardy local fishermen. After checking into your hotel and freshening up, it's time for an **authentic Louisiana seafood boil!** As the zesty, aromatic steam rises, enjoy the lively sounds of Cajun music that may have you dancing the two-step. New to this scene? No problem! A local expert is on hand to demonstrate the art of peeling a heaping pile of **freshly boiled, succulent Louisiana crawfish and shrimp.** Immerse yourself in all the local joie de vivre, a joyful passion for living life to the fullest. **C'est Bon** (It's Good)!

Overnight: Houma, LA area hotel (D)

March 10, 2027 - Acadiana's Bayou Bounty!

Check out of your hotel and journey deeper into the heart of Louisiana's bayou country to visit the **Faith Family Shrimp Company.** This working dock is proudly owned by the Portier family, 4th generation fishermen committed to sustainable, wild-caught Gulf seafood. Don't forget to stock up on their famous fresh-packed dried shrimp, the perfect Cajun snack to take home! Worked up a hearty appetite? Enjoy lunch at **CoCo Marina**, set on the tip of the bayou at land's edge. Savor the bold, soul-warming flavors of Louisiana at this picturesque lighthouse restaurant offering sweeping waterfront views and amazing swamp wetlands ambiance to match the fresh food. Later today, journey to the **vibrant heart of Acadiana** and check into your Lafayette area hotel. Spend your evening **soaking up the unique culture** where Spanish, African, and Native American influences blend with rich Acadian history. Renowned as the **"tastiest town in the South,"** Lafayette is the ultimate place to treat your taste buds! Spend your evening exploring local spots to indulge in piping-hot boudin, smoky gumbo, jambalaya, and creamy crawfish étouffée. Overnight: Lafayette, LA area Hotel (B/L)

March 11, 2027 - The Rhythms of the Bayou

Start your day at a relaxed pace before diving into the heart of Louisiana's legendary Joie de Vivre. Your cultural immersion begins with **award-winning musicians Yvette Landry and Jourdan Thibodeaux.** Through soulful stories and lively performances, ranging from Creole and Cajun to Jure and Swamp Pop, you'll **discover the vibrant history of the Bayou** people who shaped the region's unique food and language. Don't be surprised if you find yourself dancing in the aisles! After a leisurely lunch on your own, you'll journey to the birthplace of a global icon: **Avery Island.** Home to the world-famous **TABASCO® Sauce**, this culinary landmark has been family-owned and operated since 1868. On your self-guided tour, explore the very grounds where Edmund McIlhenny first planted his peppers and enjoy a tasting of their diverse products. Following a late-afternoon refresh at the hotel, prepare for a **quintessential Louisiana evening!** Tonight's dinner is a true **TRIPS' experience**, featuring authentic Cajun specialties paired with live music. Sway to the unmistakable sounds of the button accordion, the fiddle, and the French language, the three pillars that define Bayou Country music!

Overnight: Lafayette Area Hotel (B/D)

March 12, 2027 - A Journey Through Time: Destrehan Plantation

Bid farewell to Cajun Country as we make our way toward the soulful streets of New Orleans. Our first stop is the **historic Destrehan Plantation**, a majestic antebellum estate established in 1787 on the banks of the Mississippi River. As you wander through the grand main house and its original outbuildings, you'll traverse **Louisiana's complex history**, from the French and Spanish Colonial eras and the opulent age of the sugar barons to the trials of the Civil War and Reconstruction. Prepare for a sensory treat as a local chef takes center stage for an **interactive cooking demonstration!** Watch as regional specialties are crafted with expert flair before sitting down to enjoy the results for a **truly delectable lunch.** Then continue into **New Orleans** to check into the Marriott on Canal Street, your ideal home base for the next three nights. Perfectly situated **just steps from the vibrant French Quarter**, you'll have the remainder of the day to begin your own "N'awlins" adventure. Whether you're hunting for antiques on Royal Street or soaking in the jazz on Bourbon Street, the city is yours to discover. During your three-day stay, also enjoy a quintessential New Orleans tradition on us! We're treating you to the

world-famous Café Du Monde, with a coupon for a plate of warm, powdered-sugar-dusted **beignets** and cup of coffee to use when you like!
Overnight: New Orleans - Marriott Canal Street (B/L)

March 13, 2027 - A Day of Heroes and Hidden Gems

We start our day with a short walk from the Marriott to the **National World War II Museum**, New Orleans' premier attraction. You'll have ample time to explore the expansive seven-building campus at your own pace. Your visit begins with a powerful grounding experience: the exclusive 4D cinematic journey, **Beyond All Boundaries**, narrated by Tom Hanks. From there, immerse yourself in world-class exhibits ranging from the **Road to Berlin** and the **Liberation Pavilion** to the poignant **Finding Hope in a World Destroyed**. If you need a moment to reflect, the **American Sector Restaurant & Bar** offers the perfect 1940s-inspired backdrop for a refreshing break. **Be sure to return to the Marriott by mid-afternoon for an experience not in any guidebook.** Since we're locals, TRIPS has a very special surprise in store for you. We're keeping the details under wraps to ensure the magic stays intact, but let's just say it will deliver for you **the true essence of Southern Louisiana!** The night is yours to explore the "Full Range of Flavors" in the French Quarter. Recently named the top culinary destination in the country, this neighborhood is a playground for your palate. Whether you're craving high-end Creole dining or a hidden po-boy cafe, the options are endless.
Overnight: New Orleans - Marriott Canal Street

March 14, 2027 - Your Exclusive St. Pat's Experience!

It may be a few days before St. Patrick's Day, but in New Orleans, the celebration lasts all week! **Get ready to dive into the heart of the festivities as nearby Metairie throws a party that rivals Mardi Gras itself!** You'll be transported to our **exclusive private venue** where you'll enjoy today's **premium open bar** and **classic New Orleans-style buffet!** From there, you've got a full range of opportunities! Take in a bird's eye view from your **private balcony** with the perfect vantage point, while your privately **reserved spot on the street** puts you right in the middle of the action. Experience a whirlwind of color and sound featuring 110 vibrant units including melodious marching bands, floats, walking clubs and "truck floats" turning the streets into a massive celebration. But fair warning, this isn't your average parade! In a **uniquely Louisiana twist**, the most coveted "throws" aren't just beads - they're **cabbages, carrots, potatoes, onions, and MoonPies!** We'll even provide a sturdy bag, as

you never know how many ingredients for a traditional Irish stew you might catch! It's a **hilarious tradition** you won't find anywhere else.

**The Ultimate VIP Bucket List Experience
Instead of Catching, You'll Be the One Throwing!**

If you've ever dreamed of being the one ON the parade float, TRIPS has the ultimate **VIP** experience for you. This is your chance to go from spectator to superstar! Step into the spotlight as you join a local crew and ride through the parade, tossing beads, potatoes and cabbages to the cheering crowds below, especially those shouting that iconic: "Throw me somethin', Mister!"

As a **TRIPS VIP**, every detail is handled so you can focus on thoroughly enjoying all of the Mardi Gras style fun. Your day includes:

- Private Round-Trip transportation with seamless service from the Marriott
- A private group breakfast to kick off your big day
- Your designated spot on the float, fully stocked with throws including beads, fresh produce and everyone's favorite - MoonPies
- Beverages on board, such as beer, wine, seltzers or even a bottle and mixer to allow you to enjoy your drink of choice
- A dedicated "Party Professional" with you every step of the way to ensure everything runs smoothly

This high-octane, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity is the perfect grand finale to your Louisiana adventure!

Optional VIP Experience Cost: \$1,280 per person

If you plan to sign up for this, please let us know at the time you book the tour!
(Minimum of 6 guests required)

After all, you're in TRIPS Country for the most spectacular time imaginable in this privately arranged and all-inclusive setting! After a full **five-hour parade extravaganza**, return to the Marriott with your haul of beads, fresh produce, and unforgettable memories! The remainder of the day is yours to **explore the French Quarter** at your own pace. Wander its historic streets, visit iconic landmarks, or settle in for a memorable dinner at one of the city's many renowned restaurants.

Overnight: New Orleans - Marriott Canal Street (L)

March 15, 2027 - Until We See You Again in the Bayou!

Savor your these final few moments in New Orleans before your transfer to the airport. As you head home, you'll **carry the vibrant rhythms, spicy flavors, and unforgettable spirit of Louisiana with you!**

****Please note that itineraries are always subject to change, and that there will be a fair amount of walking necessary throughout the week****

Zydeco Rhythms & Bayou Bites

\$4,498.00

Per Person/Double Occupancy

Single Supplement is an additional \$998.00

Trip cancellation/interruption Travel Protection is available and recommended.

Check with your club director for details.

Inclusions

- Roundtrip airport transfers
- Roundtrip airfare to New Orleans, Louisiana (checked baggage fees are not included)
- 6 nights hotel accommodations in Houma, Lafayette and New Orleans
- Breakfast at your hotel in Houma and Lafayette
- Welcome dinner in Houma
- **Lunch and cooking class at Destrehan Plantation, and lunch at CoCo Marina**
- **Cajun Dinner with Music in Lafayette**
- **Beignets and Coffee coupon for legendary Cafe du Monde in New Orleans**
- All sightseeing and admissions as listed in the detailed itinerary, including Faith Family Shrimp Company Tour, Tabasco Factory Tour, Bayou Music Tour, National World War II Museum and Beyond All Boundaries film
- **A TRIPS Exclusive St. Patricks Parade with marching bands, floats and beads!**
- Private, deluxe motor coach
- All taxes, government fees and service charges

Call today to reserve your space!!!

CST # 2057913-10

Reservations for "Zydeco Rhythms & Bayou Bites" are accepted on a first come/first served basis.

An initial **\$650.00** per person deposit is required to hold space on the tour.

This deposit is fully refundable up to November 25, 2026.

Final Payment is due in the TRIPS office on or before November 25, 2026.

Therefore, please make sure that payment is submitted to your club director at least 10 days prior to this date.

100% non refundable as of November 25, 2026.

Contact Laurie Baker at (419) 521-2712 or email lbaker@mymechanics.com

We accept most major credit cards.

Make checks payable to **Mechanics Bank/The Good Life** c/o Laurie Baker 2 South Main Street Mansfield, OH 44902

Passport Name: _____ DOB: _____ Compliant DL: _____ Ohio effective on October 1, 2020

The taxes, fuel surcharges, and other fees imposed by airlines and cruise lines have been included in the cost of your tour as of printing on March 25, 2026. Any increases in these fees or baggage fees imposed by any air carriers or cruise lines are the responsibility of the individual passenger. TRIPS makes arrangements with airlines, hotels and other independent parties to provide travel services you purchase. We do not own or operate any of the accommodation, transport or other facilities used in connection with our programs. We therefore cannot accept liability for negligence of the staff of these organizations. These parties are independent suppliers over whom we have no direct control. TRIPS is not liable in the event of any failure by any person or company to render any transportation, accommodation or other travel service provided on tours, or for expenses incurred due to delays caused by weather, strikes, war, civil disturbances, natural disasters, flight delays, government actions, mechanical failures or any acts of God. TRIPS cannot assume any responsibility for flight delays, cancellations or missed connections and is not liable for any expenses or consequences resulting therefrom, and such expenses are to be borne by the traveler. Specific airline Conditions of Carriage will apply. These conditions are the subject of International Agreements and may limit or exclude liability. The participant waives any claim against TRIPS for any damage to, or loss of, property or injury to, or death of, due to any act or negligence of any airlines, surface transportation companies, hotels or any person rendering any of the services or accommodations included. TRIPS cannot be held responsible for any claims, losses, damages for delay of baggage or other properties, inconvenience, loss of enjoyment, upset and disappointment, distress or frustrations, whether physical or mental, resulting from the act or omission of any party providing services. The participant assumes and understands that all travel has inherent risk that may result in injury or death and that participation in activities, including but not limited to: driving, hiking, walking, touring, visiting archaeological sites, walking on uneven surfaces, riding on rough roads, rafting, boating, riding in helicopters, on trains, boats, swimming, horseback and any other activities. The information contained in this brochure and online has been compiled with all reasonable care, is accurate to the best of our knowledge and is given in good faith. All services are subject to the laws of the countries in which services are rendered. Payment for any TRIPS tour shall constitute consent to all provisions in these Terms & Conditions and is binding on all travel participants.