

# TOURING BLACK AMERICA

Summer is America's backdrop for the great escape, but before you entertain notions of trade winds and white sandy beaches consider this, an exploration of African American heritage. Consider an intimate journey to places and sites that are inextricably linked to our hearts and souls.

Welcome to "TOURING BLACK AMERICA", your guide to African American historical landmarks, cultural sites, restaurants, entertainment and more in five major U.S. cities—Atlanta, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York City and Orlando.

The achievements and contributions of African

Americans criss-cross this country from coast-to-coast. Monuments and historical sites give bittersweet testimony to triumph over adversity while celebrating the legacy of an unconquerable spirit. Before your next trip, be sure to call the Bureau of your chosen city for a copy of their African American Brochure.

There is so much to discover and rediscover this summer. We hope you will use this guide as the key to many new and memorable experiences. *Have a Wonderful Vacation!*

New Orleans. The rich and varied heritage of this grand old city is apparent in its sounds, smells, tastes and faces. Like no other city in North America, New Orleans has retained the flavor of its abundant African, Caribbean and native American ancestry. Indeed, it revels in it. And while the influence of the city's French and Spanish settlers is just as permanent, New Orleans has a feel that's undeniably soulful. Every nook and cranny of this town, including its churches, schools, architecture, folklore, customs, music and food has been touched and gilded by the people from the African diaspora and reflect a strong African American presence. Once you visit, you'll want to return again and again.

"Laissez Les Bon Temps Rouler"—(Let The Good Times Roll) is the motto of New Orleans and rightly so, because its residents know how to party! Over 400 fairs and festivals annually adorn city streets offering the best in homestyle cuisine, handmade craft, storytelling, world renown music, dancing, singing, drama and mime. "Mardi Gras" (French for Fat Tuesday) is the "mother" of all parties not only in New Orleans, but in the entire U.S. This two-week carnival frenzy celebrates the city's diverse heritage with fantastic floats and costumes, formal balls, boat parades on the legendary Mississippi River, "greased pig" contest, carnival rides, an orgy of food and music, and much, more. This climaxes the day before Ash Wednesday—the first day of lent.

The "Big Easy", as New Orleans is fondly nicknamed, is the birthplace of Jazz and home to more than a few of its masters, most notably Louis Armstrong and the Marsalis clan. Let jazz move you from dust

till dawn at any of the clubs throughout the city, or perhaps sample all the city's musical charms at the **New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival**. The festival, which lasts for ten days in April honors African culture in food and music and features jazz, rhythm and blues, cajun and zydeco music.

If you'd like to know nearly all there is about jazz, check out the **New Orleans Jazz Museum** home to many artifacts, photographs and documents on this widely acclaimed African American art form.

To visit some of New Orleans' most popular night spots you must visit the city's most famous attraction, the **French Quarter**. This charming historic district features narrow streets, lined with restaurants, clubs and townhouses decorated with ornate wrought-iron balconies. The French Quarter is the actual site of New Orleans' original seventeenth century French settlement. **The French Quarter Festival** is yet another chance, also in April, to enjoy great regional dishes and famous jazz musicians.

African American history abounds in New Orleans. Specially designed tours are available to sites that are of particular interest to us. You might visit **Congo Square** where slaves met on Sunday for traditional African song and dance, or **LaLaurie House**, infamous site of brutal slave torture. Slaves once sold crafts in the enormous, colonnaded French Market where you can still buy crafts from some modern day African American craftspeople. Contact the **NETWORK** at (800) 725-5652 for more information or to arrange a tour.