

A Geezer's Guide
to the
Vieux Carré
(French Quarter)



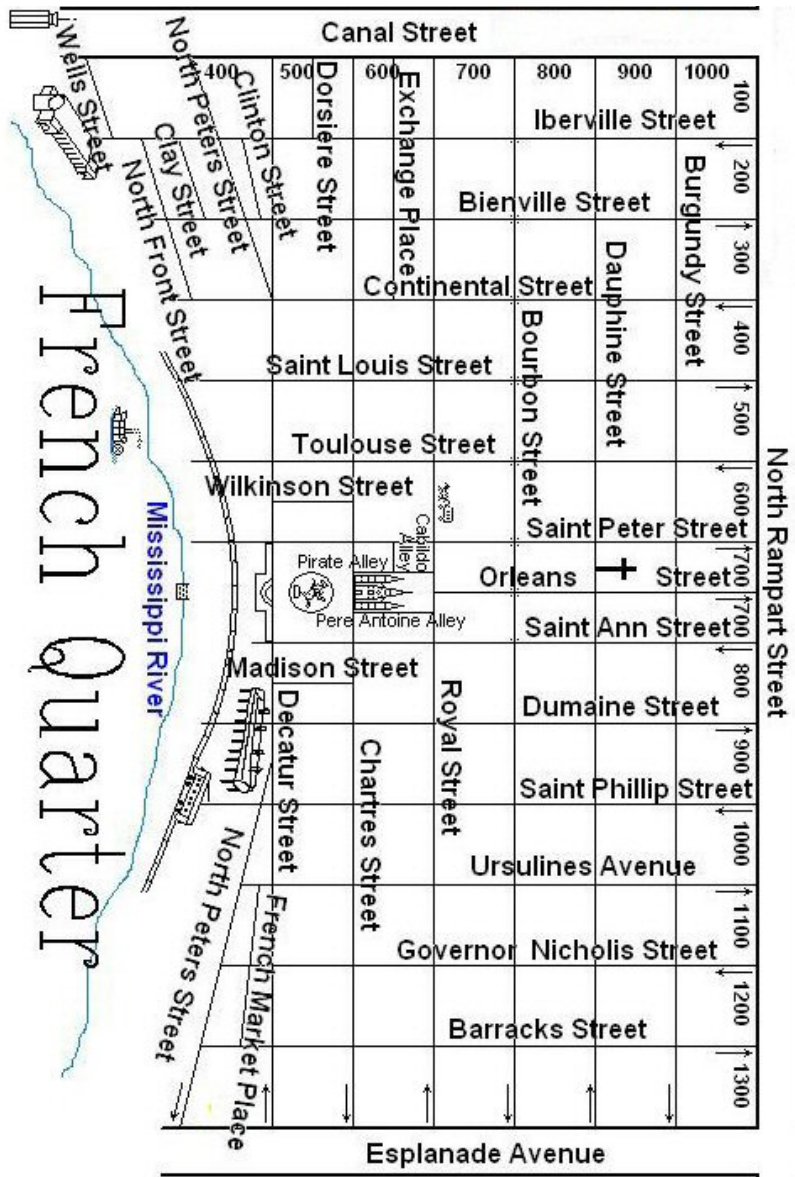
Created by Stacy Allbritton
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The Geezer's Guide to the Vieux Carré (the French Quarter)



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Ready to see the real New Orleans and speak the lingo like a native? Have no fear, squids! This is your guide to the Vieux Carré (pronounced Voo Car-ray - lesson number 1), also known as the French Quarter. Y'all'll be dubbed honorary coon-asses (people from South Louisiana) in no time!



Rue Decatur

Many world-famous sites are located on this street!

Jackson Square, Pontalba Buildings, St. Louis Cathedral: At the center of this street is **Jackson Square**, which faces the Mississippi River. The streets surrounding the Square (what the locals call it) are limited to pedestrians so you can poke around here and enjoy the local artwork, psychic readings, and street bands.

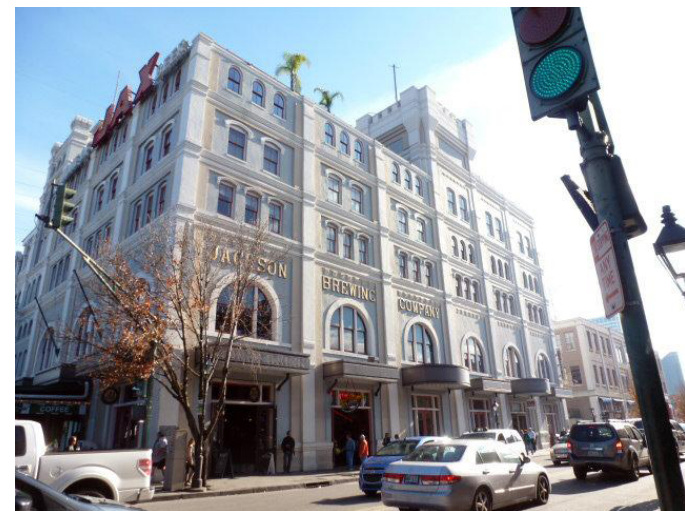


The **Pontalba** buildings surrounding the Square boast typical Spanish architecture (wrought-iron filigree balconies) and are the first known apartment buildings in the New World. (Yes, friends, Louisiana was a Spanish colony for a few years. Shhh, don't tell anyone!) **St. Louis Cathedral** is located directly behind the Square. Flanked on either side of the cathedral are the **Cabildo** and **Presbytère** museums.

Carriage Rides (it's OK to call them **buggy rides!**) At the front entrance of the Square, you will find a line of carriages, where - for a fee - you can take a ride around the Quarter to see the local sites. Not a bad way to see the Quarter at all, if you don't mind sitting behind a mule.



Jackson Brewery (called **Jax Brewery** by natives) - One block upriver and across the street (from the front of the Square) is the old Jackson Brewery, converted into a shopping mall. You can get a great view of the river from the food court.



Café du Monde - One block downriver and across the street from the Square is Café du Monde, an open-air café that serves traditional New Orleans coffee and chicory blend and beignets (French doughnuts, pronounced Ben-Yayz).



Decatur Shopping and Dining - If you continue downriver on Decatur (on either side of the street), you will find many charming boutiques that sell all kinds of Louisiana souvenirs and treats, such as **Tisket-a-Tasket**, **All that Jazz**, and the **Royal Praline Company**. What's a praline, you ask? It's a yummy confection made of sugar, cream, butter and pecans - all natural! Pronounce it prah-leen, please. If you say pray-leen, they'll spot you as #1) a yankee (the horror!) or #2) a tourist. **Tujaques** oyster bar and seafood restaurant is a great place to stop for a snack or a po-boy (submarine - no pun intended - type sandwich, only much better, hehe).



French Market - Continue past the shopping on Decatur and you will eventually reach the Gazebo, an open-air music venue and restaurant. Walk another block downriver and you will find the **French Market**. Vendors sell anything from fresh fruits and vegetables to coffee, souvenirs, and antiques, and general junk.

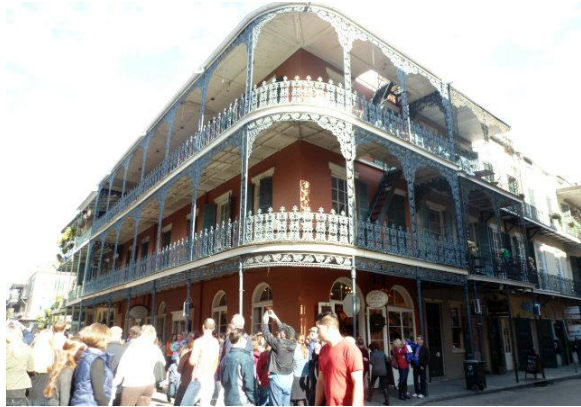


Decatur Dining - There are a lot of good eats in the French Market area: Margaritaville, Louisiana Pizza Kitchen, and small cafés.



Rue Royal

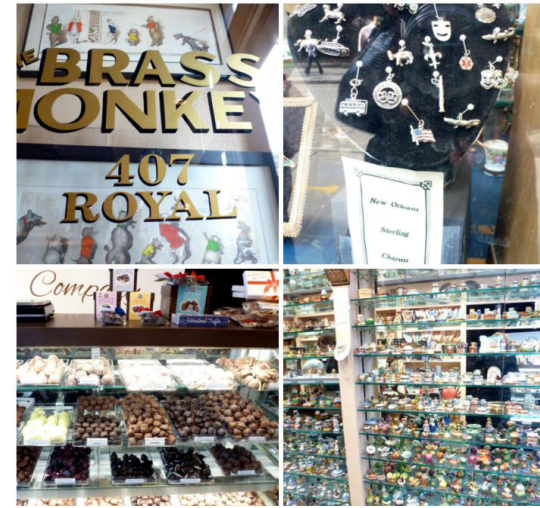
Just two blocks away from Decatur is **Rue Royal**, a must-see for shoppers and site-seers. Here you'll find that building that shows up all the movies. You know, the one with the curved balconies.



On Royal, you can also see typical New Orleans architecture (**shotguns**, **shotgun doubles**, **Creole cottages**, **Spanish balconies**) that you might miss in more crowded parts of the Quarter. Shotguns are straight houses, rooms placed one behind the other. Double shotguns are duplexes. Creole cottages are raised houses with shuttered French doors. Ax (ask) me about why they're built this way if you are interested.



Royal Shopping - Some of the best shopping can be found on Royal. My personal favorite is **The Brass Monkey Gift Shop and Chocolaterie**. This shop sells genuine New Orleans-inspired Limoges - red beans, café au lait, street cars, you name it - *and* hand-dipped chocolates.



Keep walking and you can't miss all kinds of jewelry shops, antiques (yes, guns and knives, too!), art galleries, live music and souvenir shops.



Rue Chartres

If you want to wet your whistle off the beaten path, take a walk on **Rue Chartres**. This is where the locals go (instead of the hustle and bustle of Bourbon). You can also find fine dining (white linen table cloths and all!) at **Maximo's**. Oh wait - I almost forgot - it's pronounced Charters.



Rue Bourbon

If you're brave enough to push through the crowd, you might want to take a peek at **Bourbon Street**. This is where tourists go to let it all hang out. What's there to see on Bourbon?

Preservation Hall - where traditional jazz is played (on the corner of Bourbon and St. Peter).

Spirits Bar - where a local barber was murdered by his mistresses. You can have your picture taken in the "shot chair" or in the hearse outside. (Egads!) Their signature drink is the Resurrection.

Marie Laveau's Voodoo Shop (corner of Bourbon and Dumaine) - Marie is the most famous New Orleans voodoo queen, and in this shop you can find all kinds of books and items pertaining to the voodoo religion.

Jean Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop (corner of Bourbon and St. Phillip) - the oldest bar in the USA, and supposedly haunted by the pirate himself.

Old Absinthe House (corner of Bourbon and Bienville) - really cool old bar that over 200 years old.



Other Points of Interest

Pat O'Brien's - (called by Pat O's by locals) - On St. Peter, about half a block from Bourbon. This is a beautiful bar, even if you don't drink there, you can see what a typical French Quarter courtyard looks like behind the buildings. Their signature drink is the **Hurricane**.

Croissant d'Ox Pâtisserie - typical French pastry shop where you can enjoy a nice cup of coffee, croissants, quiche, or a delicious confection in the courtyard. Located on Ursulines.

Deanie's Seafood Restaurant - located on Iberville (not eye-ber-ville, but ih-ber-ville), just a couple of blocks from Rampart. Delicious local cuisine and a nice bar, too.

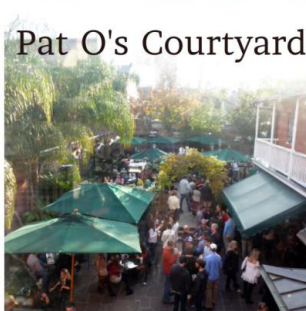
St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 - This marble city is located between Rampart and Basin Streets just outside the Quarter. You can see typical above-ground family tombs (designed this way because of the water table in New Orleans). Marie Laveau is buried here, and pilgrims often leave talismans on her gravesite. Stay away from cemeteries after dark, though - thieves and muggers (or worse) abound, waiting for unsuspecting tourists.



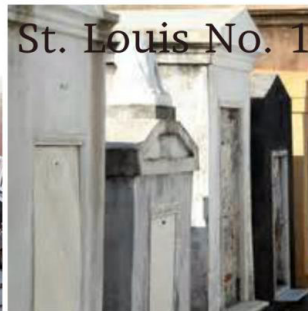
Croissants!



Deanie's Seafood!



Pat O's Courtyard



St. Louis No. 1

So there you have it, bubbleheads! Hope y'all enjoy my city, where we like to say,

"Laissez les bons temps rouler!"
(Let the good times roll!)



♥ Stacy