

New Orleans: The Big Easy

8 Days / 7 Nights

Departure Date: November 9-16

Tour Code: NORL90

DAY ONE — D

Our travels are not far but to get in the big city mood we make our way south into the Windy City – Chicago. Tonight we experience a true Chicago treasure as we sink our teeth into a mouth watering dinner at Lawry's The Prime Rib. Lawry's occupies the 1890's McCormick Mansion so enjoy the rich history, comfortable elegance and unique menu featuring their famous Roasted Prime Ribs of Beef served tableside from gleaming silver carts. After this fabulous experience our hotel is just a stone's throw from the restaurant at the Fairfield by Marriott.

DAY TWO — CB

The road beckons as we continue on our way through Mid-Western cities and towns and arrive in Sikeston, MO at the Drury Inn & Suites. Here we will rest our heads in anticipation of getting to our desired destination of New Orleans.

DAY THREE — CB, D

New Orleans, here we are! Let's get a really good feel for the city tonight as we experience dinner and Cajun entertainment at Mulate's Restaurant this evening. Following our enjoyable evening we check into the Drury Inn & Suites just blocks from Bourbon Street in downtown New Orleans.

DAY FOUR — CB

Today we experience a comprehensive yet fun-filled local city tour of New Orleans. As your guide gives historical commentary about the city and area you will be fascinated by the many districts, neighborhoods, architecture, history and heritage. Sit back, relax and get to know this amazing location. Don't forget you still have to enjoy the rich, sugary and famous New Orleans beignet! We pause to do that before continuing our tour to see what it takes to bring the annual Mardi Gras parade to life year after year. Wander the huge Blaine Kern's Mardi Gras World with your guide to learn about the history of this unique and festive tradition. Go beyond its reputation for revelry to get a deep understanding of the real Mardi Gras and its meaning. You will love the experience of touring the space where artisans create spectacular floats for over 40 parades all over the country each year. Once you've taken that in, we return to the city and you can enjoy free time for the remainder of the day. New Orleans has so much to offer and is easily walkable. Relax with a drink on a veranda, dine in a famous restaurant, dance to live music happening all through the city or ... it's all up to you to have a great time in this one-of-a-kind destination!

DAY FIVE — CB, D

We start off our morning with a trip to the National World War II Museum. Watch "Beyond All Boundaries" a visual, 4-D experience of the many battles in World War II featuring stories, archival footage and advanced special effects. Next, travel the famous River Road and set foot on the west bank of the Mississippi River where you will visit the historic Laura Plantation. This is a minimally restored, original Louisiana Creole plantation known for its early 19th century raised big house along with several surviving outbuildings, including six slave cabins. Because of its historical significance, the plantation is on the National Register of Historic Places. Did you know that the parents and family of U.S. singer-songwriter Fats Domino had lived on this plantation as slaves? Now that you've worked up an appetite, we return to New Orleans and put our chef hats on at the New Orleans School of Cooking. We'll not only watch a chef demonstrate techniques to create famous dishes, but also get us involved in preparing delicious Cajun cuisine. After you've eaten this wonderful meal you all receive copies of these timeless recipes!

DAY SIX — CB, L

After breakfast, it's time to set out on a narrated Cajun Pride Swamp Trip. Tour the privately owned wildlife refuge in the Manchaca Swamp in a comfortable, covered boat with open viewing from any seat. Swamp creatures are unafraid and often responsive to our captain's voice. In the safety of the boat, you will be able to get within feet of what they call "jumping gators." Are you hungry yet? Board the Steamboat Natchez for a breathtaking view of the city's skyline and the shores of the Mississippi. Then stroll to the upper deck to hear the live Dixieland jazz band perform. Maybe you will want to work off a few calories since dancing is encouraged! After the cruise, enjoy a final night of exciting New Orleans - where the action never stops.

DAY SEVEN — CB

We begin our journey homeward today, retracing our steps back to the Drury Inn & Suites in Sikeston, MO. Get a good nights sleep and we're almost home!

DAY EIGHT — CB, L

We return home today, but not before one last buffet style luncheon with our fellow travelers at the Thunder Bay Grille in Rockford, IL. Once home, share stories and pictures of the wonderful time you had while visiting The Big Easy.

PER PERSON PRICING:

\$1,933 Double | \$1,817 Triple | \$1,729 Quad | \$2,440 Single

Deposit: \$200 per person within 7 days of making reservation. Final payment is due 60 days prior to departure. Luggage handling is included for one suitcase. RoamRight Insurance is available and strongly recommended.