

Historic Women of the River Parishes

Under French Civil Law women in Louisiana, including women of color, were entitled to some rights. Although they did not have all the rights given to men, they were able to own their own land, own their own businesses, and manage and oversee plantations. In the River Parishes, there were several women that helped to create the unique culture of the region. On this journey, you will explore the diverse livelihoods of Creole women, as you travel throughout the River Parishes on this wonderful experience.

DAY 1

Your trip begins in Destrehan with breakfast at **Honeydoux Cafe and Bakery**. Enjoy a delicious light meal or have a tasty breakfast sandwich.

Next, you will explore the “Unheard Voices of the German Coast,” on a guided tour with Dianne “Gumbo Marie Honore’ at **Destrehan Plantation**. Dianne is a descendant of Jean-Baptiste Destrehan who was the founder of Destrehan Plantation. During the tour, you will walk the grounds where hospitals were run by enslaved women.



Next, travel to Reserve to learn the history of Amelia Picou, a free woman of color who became the owner of the **Reserve Plantation** after her husband died. Shortly after her husband's death, his brother sold Amelia his interest in the plantation, which made her the sole owner of the property. The Reserve Plantation is now known as the **Godchaux House**.

Your lunch will be in LaPlace at the Grille at Belle Terre Restaurant. Enjoy a delicious meal and the picturesque views of **Belle Terre Country Club**.

After lunch, you will travel to the **Frenier Cemetery** to learn the truth and legend about Julia Brown, a prominent African American landowner, local healer (traiteur), and midwife. The legend is: Julia was a Voodoo priestess who predicted the Category 4 hurricane on September 29, 1915 that killed everyone in the entire village.

There's more to learn about Julia Brown on a relaxing **Cajun Pride Swamp Tour**. The tour features a replica of Julia's house surrounded by the primitive beauty of moss-draped Cypress trees and sightings of alligators and other wildlife.

Your tour ends today with dinner at **Frenier Landing Restaurant and Oyster Bar** overlooking beautiful Lake Pontchartrain.



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DAY 2

This morning you will travel to Convent to begin your experience with breakfast at the **Creole House Restaurant**. Enjoy a delicious Southern, Creole meal.

After breakfast, learn the history of Mimi Zilla, a Free Woman of Color who owned and donated the land to build **St. Michael's Catholic Church**. Inside the church are the Lourdes Grotto, the Henry Erben Pipe Organ, and a portrait of a lamb (Lamb of God) that looks at you no matter where you walk in the church. Next to the church is the Cemetery, where you will enjoy a living history of prominent women buried in the cemetery.

A few miles from Convent is the town of Paulina, where you are told the vision of Martha Deroche, a dream that guided her to build **Our Lady of the Blind River Chapel**. The one room sanctuary is hidden in the marsh on the Blind River.

Next, travel to Vacherie and discover the life of Laura Locoul and other women, both free and enslaved, who were instrumental in managing and maintaining **Laura Plantation**. Learn how Creole women formed businesses and partnerships when the Americans attempted to take control from the Creoles who owned sugar plantations.

For lunch, enjoy a delicious meal in a relaxing and casual setting at **Oak Alley Plantation Restaurant**.

After lunch, you will tour **Oak Alley Plantation** and learn the life of Josephine Stewart and her passion for sharing the historic plantation with visitors, which included the grounds, her gardens,

the house, and the alley. You will also learn that Josephine encouraged promising students to continue their education and supported those who showed interest in pursuing higher education.

Tonight, travel to Lutcher for dinner and enjoy a meal at **Nobile's Restaurant**. When placing your order for dinner, make sure you include Baba, a dessert handed down from Les Babas de Chouquette, an enslaved woman who lived on a plantation just below **St. Michael's Catholic Church**. During your meal, learn why Chouquette and good things to eat are synonymous.

DAY 3

You will begin your tour in LaPlace with breakfast at **Chung's Heavenly Cafe**. Enjoy a delicious Croissant and a basket of beignets.

After breakfast, you will travel to Garyville to explore the talents of Luise Von Seybold Marmillion who owned and managed **San Francisco Plantation** for years after her husband died. Louise hosted plays in her home and was the piano and organ player for **St. Peters' Catholic Church** and **St. John the Baptist Catholic Church**.

Next you will learn the history of Louise Monica-Hebert and Agnes Hodgins-Monica at the **Garyville Timbermill Museum**. Louise and Agnes were prominent Italian entrepreneurs who owned their own grocery stores in the largest Sicilian community outside of New Orleans.

The tour ends in LaPlace with lunch at **Petra Restaurant**. You will enjoy a delicious meal in this Italian family style restaurant.



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