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## The Atchafalaya Basin

For many generations, the Cajuns of the Atchafalaya Basin have depended upon this wild and primitive land for their survival in every sense of the word. Before the Cajuns, it was the legendary home of the Chitimachas Indians who settled this diverse overflow region of the Atchafalaya River. Living in harmony with the land that we consider the big woods, they consumed what they needed and left the balance at peace with itself. This vast piece of woodlands that covers more than 800,000 acres from Simmesport, LA to Morgan City, LA, is one of the most complex man-controlled flood systems in the world and is responsible for draining flood water from as many as 38 of the contiguous United States.

### Atchafalaya Basin

The Atchafalaya Basin's annual fluctuation of its water levels presented plenty of opportunities for Cajun families to reap the riches of the swamp's treasures. In the spring, families would do commercial fishing and in the summer and fall, during lower water levels, the Cajuns would engage in plenty of trapping of fur-bearing animals, selling the pelts to buy what they needed to survive. Also, since the basin is so dense in many areas, covered with cypress, willow, oak and other species of trees, it made for a prime habitat for thousands of species of animals. Deer, rabbit, squirrel, frogs, alligator, turtles, birds and snakes are just a few animals that populate the great basin. Presently, millions of pounds of crawfish are harvested in the Atchafalaya Basin by commercial fishermen and exported throughout the world, creating a way for Cajuns to continue making a living by traditional means.

Though the basin is constantly changing geographically because of silt deposits from the northern states, it is still a mosaic of small streams, lakes, bayous, and swamps which are dotted with giant cypress stumps, left from the logging industry of days gone by. It is also the spring of many oilfields, which share in the history of Louisiana's economic growth. The Atchafalaya Basin Swamp has certainly meant something different to each person that has been introduced to it through the ages. To Jean Lafitte, it was a hideout for treasures. For the south, it was a geographic advantage during the Civil War. To the Chitimachas Indians, it was their world. To the Cajuns, it has been the last frontier. As for those of us who take visitors into its essence each day, it is our lifeblood, and it retains with it the stories of our ancestors, which we are entrusted with to keep alive for future generations to come.

### Atchafalaya Basin

#### McGee's Landing Hours of Operation:

##### Atchafalaya Basin Swamp Tours:

Daily Tour Departures: 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m.

Sunset Cruises Available with Reservations

**Admission:**

Adult: \$20.00

Seniors \$18.00

Children (Under 12) \$15.00

(Minimum of 5 Adults For Departure)

**Airboat Tours:**

Daily Departures by Reservation:

Adults: \$50.00

Children: \$35.00

(Minimum for Departure: \$150.00)

**Café and Bar**

Monday - Thursday: 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Friday - Saturday: 11:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Sunday: 11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

**Allemond Point Campground:****Rates:**

*All rates include water and electricity.*

Daily RV Campsite Rates

\$30.00 + Tax / 30 Amp Site

\$35.00 + Tax / 50 Amp Site

**Directions:**

- From I-10 EXIT 115 CECILIA / HENDERSON
- Turn south 0.1 miles onto GRANDPOINT HWY / LA-347
- Turn left (east) onto HENDERSON HWY / LA-352. 2.6 miles
- Turn right onto HENDERSON LEVEE RD. 2.7 miles
- Turn left and cross over levee