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[www.visitlakecharles.org](http://www.visitlakecharles.org)



From a Cajun holiday season to the second-largest Mardi Gras in Louisiana, there are plenty of annual events in [Lake Charles](#) to mark on your calendar. Located in the heart of Southwest Louisiana, this lively destination is the place to be for its outdoor recreation, casino resorts, and an enchantingly delicious culinary scene. Called Louisiana's Playground for a reason, Lake Charles' festivals are family friendly and include live entertainment, scrumptious local food, and much more. Read on to see some of Lake Charles' top events so you don't miss out while you're here.

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#### [Mardi Gras of Southwest Louisiana](#)

The Mardi Gras season officially kicks off each year at the annual Twelfth Night Celebration, typically on January 6. Royal courts welcome more than 60 krewes as they usher in the new season's royalty with regal costumes. This kicks off a month-long celebration with private krewe parties leading up to a long Mardi Gras weekend spanning Friday to Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras Day). The season is packed with family-friendly

events including the World-Famous Gumbo Cookoff Extravaganza, Merchant's Parade, Children's Day and Parade, Krewe of Barkus Dog Parade, Zydeco dancing, Iowa Chicken Run and so much more! Check [www.swlamardigras.com](http://www.swlamardigras.com) for a full spectrum of events!

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#### Live Music Concert Series

The Zydeco roots run deep, and so does the love of all varieties of music in Southwest Louisiana. The City of Lake Charles promotes **the Downtown at Sundown Concert Series** in the late spring with the **Live @ the Lakefront Series** also taking place near the same time

of the year. Both events feature artists, local vendors, food and music. These events are the perfect ways to get to know the locals and character of Southwest Louisiana.

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#### Food Festivals

In addition to the **Gumbo Cookoff** held during Mardi Gras each year, Southwest Louisiana hosts the **Boudin Wars**, and local meat markets faceoff with an array of boudin flavors from smoked to specialty – such as bacon-wrapped! Another meat event is the **Smoke & Barrel** barbecue and whiskey festival, complete with live music and good company! In addition, the ever-popular **Rouge et Blanc** wine event is also a show-stopper that raises funds for the McNeese State University Banners Arts & Cultural Series. And of course, no Louisiana area could resist having a **Crawfish Festival**! Stay tuned to [www.visitlakecharles.org](http://www.visitlakecharles.org) for more food events!

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#### Christmas and Holiday Events

It begins to look a lot like Christmas in Southwest Louisiana each November with the Mistletoe & Moss Holiday Market. The Junior League of Lake Charles creates a winter wonderland experience for local and traveling vendors to show off their products, perfect for Christmas shopping. Each city in Southwest Louisiana has its own take on the holiday spirit, and choral works, concerts, ballets, and all performing arts groups also jump into the spirit. The City of Sulphur hosts Christmas Under the Oaks with a tremendously popular holiday market, carnival rides, a parade, live music and – *snow*! The City of Lake Charles boasts a street parade and a boat parade as well as a shimmering display of fireworks over the lake. The northern most city in Southwest Louisiana celebrates train culture with a candy cane Holiday Train that brings in good tidings to the town of DeQuincy! Check out holiday events at [www.visitlakecharles.org/cajunchristmas](http://www.visitlakecharles.org/cajunchristmas)

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