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Natchitoches Historic Downtown  
781 Front Street  
Natchitoches, LA 71457  
(318) 352-2746  
[www.facebook.com/NatchitochesMainSt/](http://www.facebook.com/NatchitochesMainSt/)



Southern hospitality at its finest.

Natchitoches lands on many “best of” lists. Southern Living Magazine readers voted Natchitoches one of the “Best Small Towns in the South.” Travel Awaits readers named Natchitoches one of the “12 Friendliest Small Towns in the U.S.” A visit to the heart of the city shows why Natchitoches receives this attention. The historic downtown showcases centuries-old landmarks and architectural gems that are home to boutiques, restaurants, and galleries. This vibrant district also hosts lively festivals and annual events. Natchitoches’ Historic Downtown is the place to shop, eat, drink, be merry and enjoy

## Historic Downtown Annual Events

A look at the [Natchitoches calendar of events](#) shows a city that enjoys great food, listens to music of all genres, watches krewe parades, and celebrates the holiday season in a spectacular way! Here are two annual historic downtown festivals to put on your calendar:

- [Natchitoches Meat Pie Festival](#) in September — Meat pies are one of Louisiana’s state foods, and Natchitoches is the capital of these handheld, beef, and pork-filled pastries. Indigenous Native Americans introduced meat pies to European settlers and the recipe has evolved over the last 300 years. Sample these savory pies while listening to live music.
- [Natchitoches Christmas Festival](#) — In 1927, the city’s electrician strung Christmas lights to add some holiday sparkle to Front Street. Ever since then, Natchitoches has been called the “City of Lights.” Beginning the Saturday before Thanksgiving and lasting until January 6th every year, 300,000 dazzling lights set the historic downtown aglow. Join the first day’s activities with food vendors and live music along Front Street. The daylong event culminates with a lighting ceremony and fireworks.



## Historic Downtown Places to Visit

The centuries-old buildings in the historic downtown are still going strong. You’ll find unique shops, art galleries, casual eateries, fine dining restaurants, and inviting bed and breakfasts. To learn more about Natchitoches and Louisiana, visit:

- [Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Historic Site](#) — Acquaint yourself with Natchitoches’ beginning as a 1700s French settlement. The fort has recreated cabins, a chapel, and mercantile. The site offers educational programs about colonial life. On select dates, you can even learn how to make ice cream the old-fashioned way!
- [Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and Northwest Louisiana History Museum](#) — The Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame celebrates the achievements of athletes and coaches from Louisiana, including Shaquille O’Neal and Terry Bradshaw. You can relive great sports moments and learn about Hall of Fame inductees through interactive media. Under the same roof, the Northwest Louisiana History Museum explores 3000 years of history and the unique cultures that make Natchitoches what it is today.
- [Kaffie-Frederick General Mercantile](#) sells an eclectic collection of goods — everything from housewares and hardware to classic toys you haven’t seen for years. Salespeople ring up each sale on a 1910 cash register. It’s a trip down memory lane!

## Historic Downtown Tours

Natchitoches’ National Historic Landmark District lends itself to both walking and carriage tours.

The Cane River National Heritage Area offers free [historic district walking tours](#), Wednesday through



Saturday at 10 a.m. Tours begin at the Natchitoches Area Convention and Visitor Bureau at 708 Front Street.

- The [Cane River Carriage Company](#) offers historic district tours departing from 746 Front Street. Call 601-807-9087 for tour times and prices.

Whether you're exploring as a family, traveling with friends, or looking for a couple's getaway, head to Natchitoches' historic downtown to see for yourself all the charm this "City of Lights" offers!

Festival dates, attraction hours, and admission fees are subject to change. Please check the [official Natchitoches website](#) for more information.