



Louisiana's "No Man's Land" Sample Itinerary



The Louisiana Purchase instantly doubled the size of the young United States, and it secured the valuable Mississippi Valley making modern America possible. In the northern parts of the purchase, Lewis and Clark established the limitations of the Purchase, but south of the Red River the lines and the intent of the sale were murky in territories that had been lightly colonized for at least three generations.

Most of southwest Louisiana was simply not part of the Louisiana Purchase. And while waiting for the diplomats to draw the western boundary of America's new purchase, the commandants of the responsible federal and Spanish garrisons closest to the area in question made a simple gentleman's agreement about the disputed territory. In a practical sense, they agreed to leave the land alone and unclaimed. They agreed to not send in militia, customs

officers, or regulators of any sort. Any inhabitants would be unprotected, ungoverned, and untaxed. The commanding officer at the American fort near Natchitoches, Louisiana, and his counterpart in Nacogdoches, then capital of Spanish Texas, crafted the first "no man's land." They agreed to not legally claim a swathe of land between them to the Gulf of Mexico, at least for the time being, until the diplomats drew their final lines. This wedge of "No-Man's Land" was the status quo for nearly thirty years.

The era of "No Man's Land" officially ended only when the US physically installed a military presence "Cantonment Atkinson" in 1829.

No Man's Land looks forward to working with you to customize an itinerary that suits your group. This sample itinerary is intended to provide options for a group tour and indicates the minimum time a tour group should consider at each stop. Please contact the local Convention & Visitors Bureau for more information. Contact information can be found for each parish below.

<https://www.visitnomansland.com/>

3 hours [**Creole Nature Trail All-American Road**](#), One of only designated 43 All-American Roads in the entire United States, the Creole Nature Trail is a journey into an untamed wilderness. Right from the vehicle you will see alligators, multiple bird and waterfowl (over 400 species spotted each year) and other marsh wildlife...all in their natural habitat. Several over-water boardwalks also provide opportunities where you can stretch your legs and as well as get up close and personal with nature. (Step on guide available through Lake Charles CVB or self-guided available through free app in six languages).

Lunch – 1.5 hours (multiple options available, Here’s a list of the **top 20 restaurants** as voted by the locals. Two noted below)

[**Seafood Palace**](#), 2218 Enterprise Blvd., Lake Charles, LA. This is where the locals go for the best gumbo in town and fresh, flavorful Louisiana seafood.

[**Luna Bar & Grill**](#), 719 Ryan Street, Lake Charles, LA. Since 2004, Luna Bar & Grill has served a diverse menu that mixes regional flavor with eclectic tastes such as Crawfish Stuffed Avocado and Red Fish Apollo plus unique and delicious sandwiches. On Sundays, be sure to check out their Jazz Brunch from 10:00-14:00 (2:00 pm).

1 hour [**Historic Charpentier District**](#) - On the National Register of Historic Places, the Charpentier Historic District covers 40 blocks of downtown Lake Charles. Homes dating from the late 1800s to the early 1900s primarily designed and built by carpenter architects. (Step on guide available through Lake Charles CVB or self-guided available through free app in four languages).

30 minutes [**Mardi Gras Museum of Imperial Calcasieu**](#), 809 Kirby St., Lake Charles, LA, 337-430-0043 Explore the largest Mardi Gras costume display in the world. From the history of the festival, to costume design, king cakes, and the marvel of 12th Night and Royal Gala. Showcases a complete Mardi Gras parade display, including a parade float that everyone can climb aboard.

30 minutes **King Cake Demonstration, Tasting and Coffee**, 809 Kirby St. Lake Charles LA The Mardi Gras season which begins on Twelfth Night (January 6), is expressed on king cakes with the carnival colors of green, yellow, and purple. The meaning behind the carnival colors will be explained before having group members (4-5 per cake or mini individual cakes available) ice then custom decorate their cake. As a king cake is cut, each person waits anxiously for their piece to locate the small baby. Next, tasting of each of the cakes! Coffee service also available. (Group tours only, booked thru the Lake Charles CVB)

Experience the state-of-the-art [**Crying Eagle Brewing**](#) constructed from the ground up to produce great craft beer and be a place to enjoy it. Features a custom 30-barrel brewhouse for our large distributed brews while the “Brewer’s Playground” pilot system is for taproom-exclusive brews along with a taproom with plenty of comfortable indoor seating. Or, step outside to the beer garden to relax and enjoy Louisiana’s beautiful outdoors while playing a game of washers or bean bag toss. Hungry? Enjoy a hand-rolled artisan pizza or sandwich. 1165 E. McNeese St., Lake Charles, (337) 990-4871

Overnight Lake Charles - Check in to hotel. Free time to explore resort and have dinner on own OR coach to one of resorts for guests to enjoy dinner and resorts on their own – overnight Lake Charles. Enjoy dining, shopping, nightlife and so much more at Lake Charles’ world-class gaming resorts: [L’Auberge Casino Resort](#) or [Golden Nugget Lake Charles](#)

45 minutes **Travel to Allen Parish Tourist Commission**

[Allen Parish Tourism Commission, 8904 Hwy 165 Oberlin, Louisiana; 337-639-4868](#)

Contact: [Adagria Haddock, Director, \[director_allenparish@yahoo.com\]\(mailto:director_allenparish@yahoo.com\)](#)

1 hour Arrive at Allen Parish Welcome Center for refreshments and tour of facility. Restroom facilities available.

1 hour Arrive at [Leatherwood Museum](#), self-guided tour or with a Docent if requested. Call 800-639-4868 or 318-335-0622 to schedule your tour.

1 hour [Coushatta Casino Resort](#), 77 Coushatta Drive, Kinder, Louisiana 70648 | 1-800-584-7263
Check-in to hotel - Louisiana’s largest casino resort features a 100,000 square foot gaming floor, luxurious hotel rooms, top rated golf, a luxury RV resort, fabulous restaurants, live entertainment and more.

Free Time & Dinner

Whether you’re looking for a flavorful steak dinner, an impressive buffet, a juicy burger, a sweet treat or a good drink, you’re in luck. Once you are done playing games at the casino or a round of golf on the course, sit back, relax and enjoy quality food. With eleven wonderful dining options, no matter what your taste, you are bound to find something appetizing at Coushatta.

Experience the thrills and excitement of the largest gaming floor in the region, featuring the games you like, the jackpots you love, and the personal service you deserve! Thousands of reel and video slot machines including giant progressives with dream jackpots. Exciting Las Vegas style table games including Blackjack, Roulette, Craps, Mini-Baccarat, live Poker room and high stakes gaming salons, and live Bingo.

Overnight in Allen Parish

[Beauregard Tourist Commission, 313 West 1st Street, DeRidder, 337-463-5534](#)

Contact: [Lori D’Arbonne, Director, \[beautour@bellsouth.net\]\(mailto:beautour@bellsouth.net\)](#)

1 hour [Gothic “Hanging” Jail](#), 313 W. First Street, DeRidder, 337-375-3456
Celebrated in the song "The Hangman's Jail" and the only Gothic Style Hanging Jail in America, the lockup was the location of a double execution in 1928. The jail and courthouse are connected by a tunnel used to transport prisoners out of public view. The jail is believed to be haunted by the spirit of the old jailor who is sometimes seen standing the window. Tours are available Monday through Friday.

45 minutes **Depart for Vernon Parish**

30 minutes **Vernon Parish Tourism Commission** – Visitor Center Located in the historic 1910 Vernon Parish Courthouse, 201 South 3rd, Leesville, LA 71446 – Vernon Parish Tourism Commission will provide a welcome and refreshments.
Contact: John Crook, Director, jcrook@bellsouth.net

1.5 hours **Wolf Cave Vernon Unit, Kisatchie National Forest** - The Vernon Unit of the Calcasieu Ranger District of the Kisatchie National Forest encompasses 85,000 acres with several developed recreation complexes and more than 52 miles of trails through pine and hardwood forests over a carpet of blue stem grass. You can still see the ruins of Fullerton, once the booming sawmill town of the Gulf Lumber Company, at the Fullerton Recreation Site where you can enjoy picnicking, hiking, birding, camping, fishing and non-motorized boating.

Wolf Rock offers a glimpse into prehistoric times. Archaeological findings indicate that the cave was used as a habitation by early native people. The cave is somewhat difficult to get to, but visitors can enter the cave for themselves and get a taste of what it would have been like to live there. Kisatchie National Forest Rangers can be present with Dr. Charles Allen, Allen Acres B&B, can talk about tours from Allen Acres into the forest and discuss the biodiversity, large numbers of wildflower species in the forest.

30 minutes Depart for the **Museum of New Llano Colony**

1.5 hours **Tour and Lunch at the Museum**, 211 Stanton Street, New Llano, LA.
Contact John Crook, Executive Director, Vernon Parish Tourism Commission, jcrook@bellsouth.net, office: 337-238-0783, ext. 102, cell: 337-208-8310.

In 1914, Job Harriman established the Llano del Rio Co-operative Colony just outside Los Angeles, California. However, it soon became apparent there were major problems with the California location and in 1917 they found a new home in the Highlands of Western Louisiana.

For more than 20 years, the colony thrived. The lifestyle was certainly not luxurious, but there was always enough food to eat, medical care, opportunities to educate yourself and/or your children, as well as an outstanding social life with plenty of recreational activities. But in the end, due to a combination of factors, a struggle for control led to bankruptcy and devastating failure.

Overnight in Vernon Parish

45 minutes **Depart Leesville for Sabine Parish**

Sabine Parish Tourist Commission, 1601 Texas Hwy., Many, LA, 318-256-5880

Linda Curtis-Sparks, Director director@toledobendlakecountry.com

Wanda Rivers, Admin & Marketing Manager staff1@toledobendlakecountry.com

work: 318-256-5880 or cell: 318-461-0154

- 45 mins [Fort Jesup State Historic Site](#) –is located 6 miles east of Many. The site was selected by Zachary Taylor in 1822. It existed for 26 years as one of the strongest garrisons in Louisiana. The fort was once a large complex of 82 structures. This site features the original kitchen/mess building, officers’ quarters, a gift shop, and interpretive exhibits. Facilities also include a museum and picnic area. For more information call (318) 256-4117 or (888) 677-1400.
- 45 mins [Flowing Hills Creamery](#)–Family owned farm since 1979 located in Belmont, LA that processes & bottles their own cream-line milk. See where your milk comes from with a tour and demonstration. Enjoy some homemade ice cream while you’re here. For more information or to schedule group tour, call (318) 315-0997.
- Suggestion: Make a pit stop in Zwolle for hot tamales! You’ll be glad you did. Try [L& W Tamale House](#) or [Uncle Wayne’s BBQ & Tamales](#) along the way to your next destination.
- 1 hour Next, head to Cypress Bend Golf & Conference Resort in Sabine Parish to check in at [Cypress Bend Golf & Conference Resort](#), located on the central part of the lake, offering a beautiful lakeside location on 400 acres of rolling hills. All amenities are in close proximity with breathtaking views of the lake and surrounding woods. 95 luxurious guestrooms and suites plus, 18 holes of Championship golf, and spa. 3462 Cypress Bend Dr., Many, La. 318-590-1500.
- Free time FORE! Take a tour of the beautiful sights and rolling hills of the golf course at Cypress Bend Resort by Golf Cart. This 18-hole, championship golf course is the crown jewel of the Audubon Golf Trail. Enjoy over 130 bird species on the property, including the bald eagle and blue heron. Cypress Bend’s horticulturist can educate you concerning the many varieties of plants and flowers on the property. Stroll the beautiful grounds, pre-schedule individual spa services at the resort or even grab a friend or two and advance schedule one of our guided fishing excursions for expert help hauling in that legendary bass from Toledo Bend Lake.
- Dinner Enjoy beautiful scenery and a decadent dinner at the Cypress Bend Dining Room then have a nightcap in the Sabine Social Room’s cozy lounge. [CypressBend Golf & Conference Resort](#)

Overnight in Sabine Parish

1 hour Depart Sabine for DeSoto

*[Desoto Parish Tourist Bureau, 115 N Washington Ave., Mansfield, LA 71052; 318-872-1177](#)
 Contact: [Julie Rogers, Director, desototourism@gmail.com](mailto:desototourism@gmail.com) – DiscoverDeSoto.com*

30 Minutes [Village of Grand Cane, LA – Touring & Lunch](#)
 Incorporated in 1899, Grand Cane is designated one of only forty-four cultural districts in the State of Louisiana and is home of the first accredited public high school in the state. Grand Cane is the art and live theater center of Desoto Parish. The BackAlley Theatre is also located in the Cultural District and is popular destination for patrons of each of the many seasonal productions. Several buildings on the main street are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

60 Minutes **Guided tour Cook – Hill House Bed & Breakfast**– Built circa 1850, Cook-Hill House features a beautifully appointed parlor, music room, dining room, four guest rooms with three porches overlooking the gardens. Located in the heart of historic Grand Cane. Groups are invited to schedule a guided tour. Allow 1 hour. Cost \$
Contact: 816 5th St, Grand Cane, LA 71032 – (318) 858-0800

30-45 Minutes **Lunch – Village Cuisine Café** – Enjoy a delicious meal prepared with fresh ingredients or dessert and coffee or tea and scones. Can accommodate 28 inside and 16 patio seating (weather permitting).
8372 Highway 171, Ste B - Grand Cane, LA 71032
318-858-3200, Rhonda Meek, Chef
For larger groups we suggest traveling to **Billy B’s Cajun Restaurant** in Mansfield located 10 miles south on Highway 171.

Depart Grand Cane on Highway 171 South to Mansfield (10 miles). Turn left onto Highway 84. Slow down as you turn this corner and you will see the **wonderful murals** on the historic buildings. Continue traveling through town on Highway 84 for approximately 1 mile and turn right onto Highway 175. Travel 2 miles to civil war battlefield. Tour Civil War museum & battlefield.

45–60 Minutes **MANSFIELD STATE HISTORIC SITE**
\$ The site is open Wednesday – Sunday and closed on major holidays. 15149 Highway 175 Mansfield, Louisiana Phone: (318) 872-1474

DEPART MANSFIELD SHS and travel north on Highway 175 to Highway 509 to

45 Minutes **ROCK CHAPEL**
1746 Smithport Lake Road, Mansfield, LA (318) 461-2971 for entrance.
Construction on Rock Chapel began in 1891 by monks who lived in the nearby Carmelite monastery. Stones from the surrounding area were joined together with mud plaster. The walls were painted with frescoes and the ceiling with murals done by two monks from France. The Chapel was used as a retreat for the monks. It also is a site for weddings, Easter services and other celebrations. No admission required but I’m sure the church takes donations. Self-guided tour takes approximately 45 minutes. Great photo opportunity.

30 Minutes **Depart for Natchitoches**

[Natchitoches Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, 780 Front Street, Suite 100, Natchitoches, Louisiana 71457, 318-352-8072.](#)

[Contact: Anne Cummins, Tourism Sales Coordinator, groups@natchitoches.com](mailto:groups@natchitoches.com)

1+ hours **[National Historic Landmark District](#)**
At the heart of Natchitoches is the enchanting historic hub showcasing over 300 years of Louisiana French colonial history. The downtown district serves as a shopping and dining paradise. You can find everything you’re looking for including antiques, home décor, books, local art, kitchenware, clothing, souvenirs, tasty treats and much more! Each shop has its own special Southern Charm. Experiences: Cooking demonstration at Cane River Kitchenware, horse and carriage tour of Historic District. Walking tours given by Cane River National Heritage Area available Tuesday - Saturday, call for tour times 318-356-5555

- 1.5 hours **Lunch in Downtown Natchitoches – [Dining in Natchitoches](#)**
All historic district restaurants are locally owned and operated serving authentic Creole, Cajun and Southern dishes. All restaurants in Louisiana are smoke free. Call for group reservations.
- 1.5 hours **[Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Historic Site](#)**, 155 Rue Jefferson, Natchitoches, 318-357-3101
Experience the French Colonial life as you are guided through the fort by costumed interpreters. The full-sized replica of Fort St. Jean Baptiste is located on Cane River Lake (formerly the Red River), a few hundred yards from the original fort site, set up by Louis Antoine Juchereau de St. Denis in 1714. Nearly 2,000 treated pine logs form the palisade and approximately 250,000 board feet of treated lumber went into the construction of the buildings. Experiences: Artillery demonstration, soldiers life demonstration, more activities available depending on group size and time of year.
- 1 hour **[Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame & Northwest Louisiana History Museum](#)**, 800 Front Street, Natchitoches, 318-357-2492
The Northwest Louisiana History Museum explores the unique cultural traditions from early Native-American civilizations to the present. The Internationally recognized and award winning building designed by Trahan Architects of New Orleans, evokes the region’s rivers and plowed fields.
- 1.5 hours **[Los Adaes State Historic Site](#)**, 6354 Hwy. 485, Robeline, 318-352-8072
Los Adaes, the symbol of New Spain in Louisiana, was once the capital of Texas and the scene of a unique cooperation among the French, the Spanish and the indigenous Native Americans. An area rich in archaeological finds, it thrives today as one of Louisiana's most intriguing state historic sites. Built to counter any further French intrusion into Spanish territory. Experiences: Corn husk doll making, Spanish Colonial cooking demonstration and tasting, weaving demonstration.
- 2-2.5* hours **[Cane River Creole National Historical Park](#)** *Free Admission 318-352-0383, ext. 316 – Call for Hours & Tour Times Cane River Creole National Historical Park consists of Oakland Plantation and the outbuildings of Magnolia Plantation. Oakland and Magnolia represent everyday life on a Creole plantation from the 1700s to the mid- 1900s. Featuring historic landscapes and buildings, they are two of the most intact Creole cotton plantations in the United States. Generations of the same families of owners and workers, enslaved and tenant, lived on these lands for over two-hundred years. *Time varies depending on tour and travel time between locations.
- 1.5 hours **Dinner in Natchitoches**
The following restaurants are happy to accommodate groups. [Dining in Natchitoches](#)
Call for group reservations:
Maglieaux's Riverfront Restaurant – (318) 354-7767
Lasyone's Meat Pie Kitchen – (318) 352-3353
Merci Beaucoup – (318) 352-6634
Trail Boss Steakhouse – (318) 352-2080
Cane River Commissary – (318) 238-6361
Almost Home – (318) 352-2431
Grayson's BBQ – (318) 357-0166
- 1 hour **[Cane River Brewing Company](#)**, 108 Mill Street, Natchitoches, 318-238-2739
Taste, tour and experience Natchitoches' newest attraction - Cane River Brewing Company. Housed in a refurbished cotton gin building that is nearly a century old, the brewery offers several locally brewed beers - and their own root beer! Groups can tour the brewery, taste the brews, and relax in the taproom.

Overnight in Natchitoches