Mileage Chart

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For details contact Mrs. Verdis Dowdy, Director
Alexandria-Pineville Convention/
Tourist Bureau
110-B Bolton Ave. Alexandria, LA 71309
Telephone (318) 442-6671
Welcome To Mid-Louisiana

Whether you are here for a short visit or to spend a lifetime, you will find something of interest in this area. And chances are, you will discover that you are kinfolks with some of us, because our ethnic heritage is as varied as our terrain.

You can go thirty miles in any direction from Alexandria and discover whole new worlds, for Central Louisiana is a potpourri of people. North, East, South, or West, you will find ours an interesting country.

Alexandria/Pineville is in the heart of the state--we call our area the "Heartland". But it's also like the palm of a hand, its fingers reaching out into regions of several cultures and customs.

FRANCO-AFRICAN

To the north is one of the most unique settlements in the United States, and a culture which has spanned two centuries practically unchanged. These are the Franco-African people, whose forefathers were the men staffing the French outpost in Natchitoches and Cane River. The women were of African or Indian nationalities. "The People" as they call themselves, still speak the Creole language of their French ancestors. This is the Isle Brevelle Country, midway between Natchitoches and Alexandria, known in the 1700s as "Le Cote Joyouse" or the Joyous Coast. These people, who attained great wealth as free people of color prior to the Civil War, have married within their own race and have an immense pride in their ancestry.

INDIAN

Long before the white man settled this country there were Indians here. Marksville, a short drive to the east, still retains something of this heritage. The parish of Avoyelles, in which Marksville is located, was named for the Avoyel Indians, and one of the most important finds on the continent were artifacts uncovered in the Indian mounds there. A Louisiana Prehistoric Park and Museum, set up by the Smithsonian Institute, exhibits many of the artifacts which were moved from the mounds, indicating a civilization there dating back thousands of years. Some of these Indians, members of the Biloxi-Tunica Tribe, still live in the area.

ACADIAN FRENCH

You hear a lot about "Cajuns" these days, and they are a vital part of Louisiana history. Some 30 miles south is the unofficial beginning of the Acadian country. These are people of Canadian-French descent who moved to Louisiana about 1758, after having been forcibly driven from their home in Acadie, now called Nova Scotia. One of the most amazing aspects of the Acadians (or Cajuns, as they are often called) is that they have preserved their French language through the years, along with their peculiar dances, songs and cuisine.

SPANISH

An hour's drive in a westerly direction there is another culture-settlements established by the Spanish who were sent into the country as early as 1721 to set up the eastern outpost of the Spanish empire. They founded Presido Nuestra Senora del Pilar de Los Adeas, and for fifty years this spot at Robeline was the Capitol of the Province of Texas. Now a park, a stone and bronze marker explain the fort's significance. Towns such as Zwolle, Provine ai, and other villages have retained much of the Spanish influence, and their annual Tamale Festival reflects this.

FAMOUS FOOTPRINTS

History has walked along our pathways.

Hernando DeSoto marched his bands across the lands in the mid 1500s leaving us a gift of the Catahoula Cur, a one-of-a-kind hunting dog famous worldwide. LaSalle came through a hundred years later. But this remained Indian country until a shrewd merchant named Alexander Fulton opened up a store, gave liberal credit to the Indians and then allowed them to pay off their debts with their lands. On this land is the town of Alexandria, laid out by Fulton in 1805.

Other lands were settled by people who came in and received Spanish land grants in the turn of the 18th century. They settled along the bayous--Bayou Rapides, Bayou Bouef, Bayou Roberts, and laid out their roads along the paths believed to have originated as buffalo trails long before man touched these shores. Indians used the route for their seasonal or spontaneous migrations, and such notables as Sam Houston, Jim Bowie, U.S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, William Tecumseh Sherman, George Armstrong Custer, and others followed along later.

Blood soaked both the blue and gray flannel uniforms during battles fought along these roads during the Civil War, and gravestones of important figures through the years mark their time spent here.

So we in Central Louisiana, who have made so many people welcome, extend a cordial welcome to you. We may say "good morning" in a language you have never heard before, but it will be a warmly meant greeting.

We are proud of our heritage. We enjoy our part of the country.

We hope you will, too.
Alexandria-Pineville, facing each other across the mighty Red River, have long been aware of water as the source of life. Civilization developed along our bayous and today the many lakes afford both homefolks and visitors a constant source of recreation.

Alexandria-Pineville Convention/Tourist Bureau invites you to visit our plantation homes, taste our foods, rest awhile at our motels, take part in our festivals.

Contact us at Post Office Box 992-B, Alexandria, Louisiana 71309 or call 318-443-6071.

Plantation Homes and Historic Sites

KENT PLANTATION HOUSE - In Alexandria, one block off MacArthur Drive. Built in 1796 of French and Spanish Colonial architecture. Oldest remaining structure in Central Louisiana. Four-acre complex includes kitchen, slave cabins, barn, carriage house, milk house. Open daily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays. Candlelight tours available to groups by appointment. Admission.

HOTEL BENTLEY - Opened in 1908, marble columns, gilded ceilings, velvet furnishings. Used extensively during World War II when battle strategies were planned there by Generals Eisenhower, Clark, Patton for overseas battles as millions of troops trained at nearby army camps. Main St. Downtown Alexandria.

ST FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL - Erected in 1898 on corner of Fourth and Beauregard Streets at site of mutiny of troops under the command of Gen. George Armstrong Custer. Open. No admission.

ALEXANDRIA VISUAL ARTS MUSEUM - On site of first trading post of founders of Alexandria in 1805, this former bank building was one of first large edifices constructed after Civil War when entire town was burned to the ground by Federal troops. Open daily. Free. Main and Murray St. Downtown Alexandria.


LOUISIANA SEMINARY SITE - First home of Louisiana State University, opened in 1860 with William Tecumseh Sherman as headmaster. Closed during Civil War, reopened in 1865, burned in 1869 and moved to Baton Rouge. Highway 165 north, three miles. Now picnic area, with Veterans Hospital located on former campus.

BAILEY'S DAM - Marker only indicating site of dam which prevented Union gunboats from moving during Civil War to move Federal gunboats over the rapids. At OK Allen Bridge over Red River.

MOUNT OLIVE CHURCH - Dedicated in 1854, used by Union forces. Open daily. Free. Main Street, Pineville.

LOYD HALL - Plantation home, two-and-a-half stories built in 1810. Used by both Confederate and Union troops. Owner hanged as Confederate spy. Graves on the grounds and in the cellar lend credence to the "resident ghost" stories. At Lecompte, 14 miles south of Alexandria, open by appointment. Admission.
THE CEDARS - Early American architecture, constructed in 1830, typical of working plantation home. Occupied by five generations of the Pearce family after their ancestors won the place in a card game on a Mississippi riverboat. At Cheneyville, 16 miles south of Alexandria on Bayou Beouf. Open by appointment.


TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH - Built in 1853, has belonged to the same family since. Two story house of Tudor design, restored in 1980 to its original splendor. Ancient trees and gardens. In Cheneyville. Open by appointment. Admission.

Walnut Grove Plantation House - Built in 1835, has belonged to the same family since. Two story house of Tudor design, restored in 1980 to its original splendor. Ancient trees and gardens. Outbuildings consist of "cujen" cabin and double slave cabin. In Cheneyville. Open by appointment. Admission.

Daddy Sam's Antique Shop and Restaurant - Fine food served in an aura of southern charm. You can literally buy the table you eat off. In Cheneyville.

Recreational Areas


COTILE RECREATION AREA - More than 2,000 acres of water and camping areas. 100 spaces with hook-ups for campers and boats. Water skiing, boating, swimming. Boyce, La., miles north of Alexandria or off Highway 28 west at Rossville.

HOT WELLS HEALTH RESORT - 30 camp sites, restaurant, motel, picnic areas, baths, massages. Boyce, La., adjacent to Cotile Recreation Area.

INDIAN CREEK RECREATION AREA - 140 acres, 140 trailer sites, water, electricity, bath houses, swimming, boating, fishing, play grounds. Highway 165 south of Alexandria at Woodworth.

Country Living - 20 campsites, electricity, water, dump, store, gift shop. Highway 28 east of Pineville.

Alexandria Zoo - At city park on Masonic Drive. In Children's rides, picnic tables, rest rooms, fresh water.


Lodging

Alexandria Motor Inn
1212 MacArthur Drive
Imperial "400" Motel
1919 MacArthur Drive

Plasenion Motor Inn
2720 W. MacArthur Drive

Ramsell Inn
1500 MacArthur Drive

Ramsell Motel
3823 MacArthur Drive

Holiday Inn
2300 W. MacArthur Drive

Rodeway Inn
742 MacArthur Drive

Hot Walls Motel
2211 MacArthur Drive

Sheraton Inn
2716 MacArthur Drive

Greenbriar Motel
5711 Masonic Drive

Southem Inn
3923 MacArthur Drive

Travelodge
7116 MacArthur Drive

Howard Johnson's
Motor Lodge
700 MacArthur Drive

All motels, except Hot Walls, are in Alexandria.
Dining

American Spirits Dine
3306 S Jackson Street

Aunt’s Coffee Shop
2214 MacArthur Drive

Alic’s
1439 Douthiter

Barney’s Restaurant
Hwy 165 S
Rolla, Mo.

Banana Steak House
500 MacArthur Drive

Burger King
1203 MacArthur Drive
3705 S MacArthur Drive
2228 W MacArthur Drive
Alexandria, La.
2648 Holloway Road
Pineville, La.

Charlie’s Cafeteria Restaurant
Hwy 20 West
Hefie K’s
3515 Lee St.

China Restaurant
1540 MacArthur Drive

D’Amino’s Downtown
621 Third Street

Dine Queen/Burger
737 MacArthur Drive

Don’t Seafood of Alexandria
2728 MacArthur Drive

Double ‘Y’ Cafe
935 Jackson Street

Food, Inc.
3417 Jackson Street

Hickory Hut, Inc.
3510 Levee Street

Holiday Inn Restaurant
2309 MacArthur Drive

Kentucky Fried Chicken
4704 Lee Street
1215 MacArthur Drive

Lemmy’s Restaurant & Motel
1133 MacArthur Drive

Los Antiguos Restaurant
1216 MacArthur Drive

McDonald’s
1520 MacArthur Drive

Mr. Gatti’s
3820 Jackson Street

Porchelli Cafeteria
MacArthur Village
3451 Mason Drive

Shreveport’s Ashby’s Steak
2216 MacArthur Drive

Shreveport’s Restaurant

Truck’s Cypresses Inn
Rosalind Lake (Hwy. 28 W.)

Western Stu-ick’l Steak House
3824 Alexandria Mall Drive

Western King
750 MacArthur Drive

All above are in Alexandria unless otherwise indicated.

Festivals

TRADE DAYS ON COTILE - Old fashioned trading, swapping of animals, antiques, farm machinery, etc. Last weekend in March at Cotile Recreation Area.

CELABRATION - A salute to levee living. Crafts, music, street dancing. Last weekend in April in downtown Alexandria.

CATAHOULA LAKE FESTIVAL - Folklore demonstrations such as weaving, dying, soap making, activities built around waterfowl and wildlife in Catahoula Lake. Features the Catahoula Car, Louisiana’s state dog. Last weekend in October at Kees Park, Pineville.
ALEXANDRIA-PINEVILLE VICINITY

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Kent House
2. Cotile Recreation Area
3. Hot Wells
4. Little Eva
5. Bayou Folk
6. Melrose
7. Los Adaes

8. Hodges Gardens
9. Wild Azalea Trail
10. Indian Creek
11. Loyd Hall
12. Cedars
13. Walnut Grove
14. Indian Museum