"What's the Cajun country really like?"

The question is asked often by people living outside of Louisiana.

In an attempt to provide a good answer, a comprehensive pictorial publication designed to portray the Cajun country as it really is has been issued by Acadiana Profile magazine.

It's being distributed nationally, as well as throughout south Louisiana.

Titled "The Character of the Cajun Country," the special edition bears a resemblance to LIFE magazine because of its heavy photographic content.

The special issue also serves as Acadiana Profile's 20th anniversary edition. The magazine was founded in 1968 by Bob and Geraldine Angers of Lafayette. It is the largest-selling independent magazine in Louisiana history.

"What we tried to do — through the use of pictures — is to give a comprehensive overview of those things that make up the true character of the Cajun Country," says Treat Angers, editor and publisher of the magazine.

The pictorial panorama covers the land, the people, the culture, the food, the tourist attractions and the industrial fabric of the region.

This is an issue that we feel speaks well for our part of the country. It is a presentation that we feel all south Louisianians will be proud to show their out-of-state friends and business associates. We feel it describes our land with accuracy — and with the dignity to which it is entitled," Angers points out.

"Much of the national publicity south Louisiana has gotten in recent years has been misleading and distorted; it has stereotyped our area and its people in a less than flattering way. This publication was designed to correct those impressions, to give a more balanced presentation and to depict the true character of the Cajun country," Angers explains.

Copies of the issue are available at about 100 supermarkets and newsstands in south Louisiana. They can be ordered by mail by sending $5 plus $1.25 for postage and handling to: Acadiana Profile, Box 1329, Lafayette, La. 70503, or by calling (504) 339-2913.

The pictures used in this issue are in both color and black-and-white. They were selected from a collection of several thousand previously published in regular issues of Acadiana Profile over the past 20 years.

"We didn't just run pictures of people drinking beer at festivals or stuffing themselves on crawfish etouffee, although we did publish some festival scenes and share some generations of south Louisiana enjoying a backyard crawfish boil.

In addition to the cultural aspects of life in south Louisiana, the publication features the Louisiana Acadian Flag, with an explanation of its symbols and a word on the man who designed it. Also contained is a map of the Cajun country, or Acadiana, and a listing of the 22 parishes of which it is comprised.