Louisiana Back Roads — Any good gumbo recipe begins with five words: "First, you make a roux." A roux, French for "red," is a thick gravy made from hot oil, flour and chopped onion. The cook must stir it quickly to keep it from sticking and burning, ruining the flavor. The longer the cook stirs it, the darker the roux becomes — sometimes until it is mustard brown. The roux is the base for the gumbo, and the shade depends on the cook. So do the ingredients, ranging from shrimp to sausage, from chicken to crawfish to crab, or any combination thereof. The state of Louisiana is a lot like a roux. They are French, English, Irish, Scotch, Spanish, African, American Indian, German, Czechoslovakian, Yugoslavian, or any combination thereof. The people are the roux, their lifestyles the ingredients. Most things in the state haven't changed in years. They are French, English, Irish, Scotch, Spanish, African, American Indian, German, Czechoslovakian, Yugoslavian. Some fat guy with a big grin has found himself in a trendy limelight to which he is unaccustomed. The state of Louisiana is a lot like a roux. Many customs has blossomed like magnolia trees spreading along the Mississippi River. New Orleans blues This is a blues bar in New Orleans. It has a name, but it doesn't matter. It is one of many that line the streets like dark stalls, beer signs flickering behind the bars, beckoning customers inside. There is an old gum-ball machine set atop a rickety, chipped bar stool in front of the stage with a yellowed strip of masking tape on it. "Tips" was scrawled on the tape in black marker a long time ago. The gum-ball machine has only $3 in it, but it's early yet. The concrete bathroom floor has been mopped recently but not well. The pine detergent blends with the urine smell in a dank, divey way. Life along the sleepy bayou slows to a crawl at day's end. Many customs has blossomed like magnolia trees spreading along the Mississippi River. Rustic, twi-story cabins rent for $50 a night in Westwego, La.

GATOR TALES
Touring the best of South Louisiana at 55 mph or less

By CAROL RUST
Houston Chronicle

The Hurricane parties flourished long after Juan fizzled into mere strong winds and driving rain. Juan couldn't overcome the joie de vivre. From the workers in the steamiest, seamiest flesh bars on Bourbon Street to the mother of nine daughters and three sons who learned to make snails tea to satisfy her children's craving for root beer, the people are unique. They are French, English, Irish, Scotch, Spanish, African, American Indian, German, Czechoslovakian, Yugoslavian. Or any combination thereof. The state of Louisiana is a lot like a roux. They are French, English, Irish, Scotch, Spanish, African, American Indian, German, Czechoslovakian, Yugoslavian. Or any combination thereof. The people are the roux, their lifestyles the ingredients. The people are unique. They are a hardy, eclectic stock who settled here out of necessity, luck or happenstance. They are a hardy, eclectic stock who settled here out of necessity, luck or happenstance.

Instead, they scurried to liquor stores to buy mix to make hurricanes, a mostly rum drink that guarantees blindness after just so many glasses. It was made famous by the Irish bar, Pat O'Brien's in New Orleans French Quarter. The hurricane parties flourished long after Juan fizzled into mere strong winds and driving rain. Juan couldn't overcome the joie de vivre. From the workers in the steamiest, seamiest flesh bars on Bourbon Street to the mother of nine daughters and three sons who learned to make snails tea to satisfy her children's craving for root beer, the people are unique. They are French, English, Irish, Scotch, Spanish, African, American Indian, German, Czechoslovakian, Yugoslavian. Or any combination thereof. Since New Orleans chef Paul Prudhomme's recipe for blackened redfish became a hit nationwide, followed by his genuine herbal home recipes. Cajun cookbooks, mock voodoo dolls and souvenirs — from rubber alligators to key rings do the same.

When Hurricane Juan threatened the South Louisiana coast in November of 1985, few people boarded up their windows or bought flashlight batteries and bottled water. Many customs has blossomed like magnolia trees spreading along the Mississippi River. Rustic, twi-story cabins rent for $50 a night in Westwego, La.
bars, It's $4 for a draft beer if you...
Tales
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A small diamond — "it may be one; I don't know anything about jewels," he says. It was a gift from one of his satisfied customers — a local jeweler — and one of the few rewards he will get for his labors besides food on the table and a Social Security check once he becomes 65, "if I make it." Next month, depending on what trout quotas the state doles out, he'll go trout fishing. "But I hope it don't get too cold," he says. "The older it gets, the colder you go." "But then there's the May season," he says, and his voice picks up optimistically. That's when he and one of his two sons — both in their late 20s — take boats out at night after brown shrimp they call "trash." They leave at 5 or 6 p.m. "How long we stay out, it all depends," Lopez says. "If the shrimp is giving, we'll stay out all night. We make a nice livin' around his neck. The jewel looks like a star to me." He says. It was a gift from one of his customers, "I don't know nothing about jewels," he says. "I just know I got a gift." "But once he becomes 65," if I make it," the old man is getting around on his walker — something his doctors told him they had never expected to see. Jean Kliebert raise them on their 23-acre spread in Thibodaux. After living 24 years in New Orleans, which he calls "the city of sin," Edwin Tregle depends on hunters to bring their kill to Edwin, who uses every part of the animal. He cut off the jowls and tail and package it for culinary purposes and salt down the hide and roll them up to sell for purses and shoes. They cut off the feet for key chains. "I'm ever in a tough bar and start to feel threatened by the clientele, I'll just take this alligator foot out of my pocket and start picking at my teeth with it," one tourist joked. Edwin even employs a man to put black marbles where the alligators' eyes were in their skulls before they were soaked in acid to get rid of flesh.

"People are just as crazy about alligator head souvenirs as anything else," Edwin says. "I have a few different ways to use it..." he continues. "We used to make canoe paddles and other things. What's the most charming thing that you've seen?" he asks. "I can't think of anything that's pretty," he says. "It's just alligators and meat." Some of the turtles also are so for meat; the others find homes pets. The United States And Harvey and Jean have deco red another sideline they enjoy as much as "farming" their turtles. "It's a lot of work, but it come by to see their operation.

Louisiana highs
But then, the Klieberts are different from folks in just about every part of Louisiana these days — they're the biggest and the be st of something. There's the strawber river capital of the world in Pontchatoula — and they say the antiques capital of the world in Cavan ton was the home of the late notor ious Perc" Antiques aside, St. Tammany Parish does have the most charming ice cream parlor in the world. Cream Parlor opens about 10 a.m. and stays open until 2 p.m. after the last turtle has been killed. The Klieberts believe their farm makes the greatest modern invention — it would have to be the screen. I'm ever in a tough bar and start to feel threatened by the clientele, I'll just take this alligator foot out of my pocket and start picking at my teeth with it," one tourist joked. "But then, the Klieberts are different from folks in just about every part of Louisiana these days — they're the biggest and the best of something. There's the strawberry capital of the world in Pontchatoula — and they say the antiques capital of the world in Covington was the home of the late notorious Percy Antiques aside, St. Tammany Parish does have the most charming ice cream parlor in the world. Cream Parlor opens about 10 a.m. and stays open until 2 p.m. after the last turtle has been killed. The Klieberts believe their farm makes the greatest modern invention — it would have to be the screen.