

MISS LOU INVITES YOU Self Drive Tour

Plantation Home Inns of the Deep South

8 days / 7 nights

From: New Orleans

Departures: Daily 01 January 2006

- 31 March 2007

Day 1

Arrive New Orleans, Louisiana

Welcome to Louisiana and the start of a marvelous adventure. Collect your rental car and head northwest, through Louisiana's "Plantation Country" and your home for the next two nights, Nottaway Plantation or Oak Alley Plantation.

2 nights in Plantation Country

Nottaway Plantation - At the edge of sugar cane fields, Nottaway stands overlooking the Mississippi River. This enormous mansion, completed in 1859, reflects an unusual combination. Greek revival architectural elements blend with innovations that were the fanciful desires of the original owner. Not only is the floor plan irregular, but the house contained many elements that were innovative and rare

in the mid-19th century, such as indoor plumbing and hot and cold running water. All rooms include a cruet of a welcome refreshment beverage, a guided tour of the Mansion, wake-up call with hot coffee, juice, and sweet potato muffins, and a full plantation breakfast.



Oak Alley Plantation - Located on the Mississippi River between the historic cities of New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Oak Alley Plantation has been called the "Grande Dame" of the Great River Road. Nowhere else in the South will you find such a spectacular setting! The 1/4 mile canopy of giant live oak trees, believed to be nearly 300 years old, forms an impressive avenue leading to the classic Greek-revival style antebellum home. The turn-of-the-century Creole cottages are located on the grounds of the plantation, not far from the antebellum mansion. They are simple and serene...no shopping centers, no clubs, no traffic, not even the meddlesome presence of the television or interruption of a telephone to disturb the peace and quiet. Many guests prefer to just stroll the grounds, or take a long walk on the levee as they watch the mighty Mississippi River roll

by. Visitors tell us that their stays here are wonderful retreats where they unwind, clear their minds, and freshen up to face the chaos and activity of their everyday lives. In the morning, a full country breakfast (included in the rental rate) is served at the Oak Alley Restaurant from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.



Day 2

Plantation Country (254 mi/406 km)

Take the day to learn how these magnificent plantations, many built just before the Civil War, were truly "gone with the wind," as their owners lost their fortunes during that conflict. Visit Houmas House, setting for the film "Hush, Hush Sweet Charlotte," starring Bette Davis, and have lunch at the famous "Cabin" Restaurant. Watch the mighty Mississippi roll by from the banks of the levee, and unwind in the gracious setting.

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Day 3 To Natchez, Mississippi (125 mi/200 km)

Travel today through Louisiana's capital city, Baton Rouge north to Natchez, MS. You may want to stop in Baton Rouge to visit the capital building and one of the city museums. Continue north, along lovely route #61. Stop in quaint St. Francisville, and lunch and tour the Myrtles, one of the state's most haunted plantations. Hear about the poisoning of the plantation's mistress and two children by the slave, Chloe.

2 nights in Natchez

Natchez welcomes you for a two-night stay at **Dunleith Plantation**, a stately white colonnade Greek revival temple standing on a terraced rise in the heart of Natchez, surrounded by forty acres of landscaped gardens and wooded bayous. Dunleith is sometimes referred as the most photographed house in America. It was cited by the Southern Heritage Society for the beauty and grace of its architecture, and appeared in Southern Accents book "Historic Houses of the South." Beautiful Dunleith is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is a National Historic Landmark. The majestic mansion has been the backdrop for such films as "Huckleberry Finn" and "Showboat." Each room at Dunleith is decorated in period antiques and reproductions. All rooms have a private bath, individual heat and air conditioning, color TV, fireplace, and telephone. The Castle Restaurant on Dunleith's grounds offers top-notch gourmet southern dining.



Day 4 Natchez Touring

Today, you may want to visit one of the other gracious plantation homes. Natchez is world-famous for having the largest collection of antebellum homes in America. Take a ride on a Mississippi Paddlewheeler, and visit the Visitors Center... or to learn more about the Civil War, you may want to visit Vicksburg, an hour north of Natchez, with its extensive battlefield.

Day 5 To Central Louisiana (106 mi/170 km)

Depart Natchez this morning, crossing the Mississippi back into Louisiana. En route to Alexandria, a "must-see" is Frogmore, a working cotton plantation, where you will learn all about the crop that was "King" before the Civil War, and continues to be one of the region's important exports. In Alexandria, you may want to visit the Zoo, which features a special "Louisiana Habitat," showcasing the animals which are native to this state.... From alligators to cougars..... and from otters to pelicans.

Tonight's accommodations are at Loyd Hall Plantation.

There is a place where history resides in a very real world, where a working plantation produces cotton, and sit-down dinners produce a well-satisfied demeanor. Loyd Hall Plantation is one you won't forget, where the open-arm welcome and irresistible charm of Southern hospitality make you "a part of the family." Even the animals (and the ghosts) will welcome you into this familial atmosphere. This 640-acre plantation, in continuous operation since 1800, provides guests with a hands-on look at Louisiana agriculture, with crops of corn, cotton, soybeans, and cattle. A few personal friends, like Clarence, the donkey, will steal your heart. And the mysterious spirit of a violin player who appears at midnight on the second-floor verandah is one you'll always remember. Loyd Hall features ornate plaster ceilings, suspended staircases, and rare antiques. Reservations are taken daily for lunches, private receptions, candlelight dinners, pavilion poolside parties, on-site meetings, seminars, and workshops for groups. Charming and private bed and breakfast accommodations are truly one-of-a-kind. Restored bricks, original open fireplaces and high ceilings characterize the newly restored 1800's Carriage House Suites. Each opens onto a front porch which overlooks the pool, patio and pavilion areas, and each offers a bedroom, kitchen and bath.

Day 6 To Cajun Country (61mi/98 km)

Depart after breakfast for "Cajun Country," the area settled by the Acadians following their expulsion from Nova Scotia during the ethnic cleansing of "New France" by the British following the Treaty of Paris. Great food, lively music, and warm people await. Visit the Acadian Cultural Center operated by the National Park Service and Vermilionville, a living history museum. Dine at Prejean's, Randol's or Mulates for a taste of Cajun Cuisine.

Your accommodations for the next two nights are at Cretien Point Plantation or Bois des Chenes.

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Day 6 continued

Cretien Point - Somewhere on the old Chretien Point Plantation, in St. Landry Parish, a treasure trove is buried. The value has been estimated to be between \$200,000 and \$650,000. The treasure was buried by Hippolyte Chretien II, the son of the Plantations founder. In those days the people had little trust in banks, so they found a spot on their property where they felt the money would be safe. The treasure was buried in the direction of a bayou behind the house. Chretien always said that he could look out his office window and see the burial site. The treasure consisted of his wealth as well as inheritances from his father and uncles. His wife Felicity often reproached him for not revealing the whereabouts of the treasure. "If you should die suddenly we should be destitute!" Chretien would never relent; he must have thought he would be last to die. Chretien died a few years later, of Yellow Fever. After his death his wife spent many years and dug many holes searching for the treasure. She never found the treasure but supported herself playing poker with the local land barons. Felicity was a very wise and ambitious woman! The staircase at 'Tara' in Gone With The Wind, was based on an original at Cretien Point Plantation.

Bois des Chenes - Bois des Chenes is conveniently located near the geographical center of the City of Lafayette, Louisiana. This home (listed on the National Register of Historic Places) survived the Civil War and is an important entity to the history and culture of this city. This home has been owned by Dr. Francis Sterling Mudd of Virginia, who was a relative of Dr. Samuel Mudd of John Wilkes Booth fame, a Lt. Governor of Louisiana and two mayors of Lafayette. The Mouton Plantation House: the present owners have restored this Acadian style plantation house to its original. Period antiques, primarily of Louisiana French origin, as well as comparable American pieces, compliment this unique architectural gem. Collections of pottery, glass, and antique weapons further enhance the interior of this house. Adjacent to the rear of the plantation house is the Carriage House. Located in the Carriage House are three rooms, each with a private bath. The Carriage House is furnished with treasured antiques of different styles and periods. Tastefully hidden color televisions (with cable) and small refrigerators are provided in each room. The upstairs room is furnished country Acadian style and can accommodate five persons. Two rooms are available downstairs, one in Louisiana Empire style with queen sized bed, and the other in Victorian style with a tester double bed. Two suites are also available in the main plantation house. Each has a sitting room and private bath and have access to the 2nd floor gallery. The Zouave Suite features a wood-burning fireplace.

Day 7

Cajun Country Touring

We recommend strongly that you take advantage of Coerte Voorhees Nature Tour today, travelling into the Atchafalaya Basin to see first-hand the flora and wildlife that inhabit these wetlands. Louisiana has more than 40% of the total USA wetlands, and is a home for hundreds of species of migratory birds - truly an ecological treasure! Visit the home of Tobasco on Avery Island, tour the Jungle Garden there, and stop at the National Trust House, Shadows-on-Teche. Feast on more Cajun Cookin' tonight.

Day 8

To New Orleans, Louisiana (108 mi/173 km)

Alas, after breakfast, it's time to return eastward to New Orleans where your tour ends. Or, take advantage of adding a few extra nights to discover the "Big Easy," with Bourbon Street and the French Quarter, where every day seems like Mardi Gras.

Pre- and post-tour accommodation can be arranged in New Orleans

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	Prices in £s per adult sharing:			
	Single	Twin	Triple	Quad
01 Jan – 31 Mar 06	£804	£446	£353	n/a
01 Apr 05 – 31 Mar 06	£870	£482	£386	n/a

Prices include accommodation, taxes, guide book & driving directions.

Not included: flights, car hire, parking charges, excursions, admission charges & meals (unless specified).



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