

About Natchitoches

Louis Juchereau de St. Denis founded Fort St. Jean Baptiste in 1714 near the mouth of Bayou Amulet where the foot of the Red River raft, a 100 mile log jam, stopped further boat traffic upriver. The town developed along crooked streets that followed the natural levees and river channels of Les Isles de Natchitoches. River traffic had to be shifted to land transportation at Natchitoches due to the raft, so the town became an important transport city.

Several overland highways met at Natchitoches, including the Natches Trace, from the east and the El Camino Real from Mexico. These river and highway connections made Natchitoches a primary transfer point for trade and a gateway for settlers going to Texas.

In the 1830's, the River jumped its main channel and shifted its course about 5 miles east of town. Although that action left Natchitoches without a direct outlet to the sea except at times of high water, what remains today is the picturesque Cane River Lake.

Natchitoches, the original French colony in Louisiana, maintains its European flavor through its architecture, heritage and lifestyle. At the heart of this National Historic Landmark District lies Front Street, a brick thoroughfare where wrought iron balconies, restaurants and shops face the beautiful Can River Lake.

In 2004, Natchitoches was named as one of only two Preserve America communities in Louisiana by the White House and First Lady Laura Bush. In 2005, Natchitoches was named as one of the Dozen Distinctive Destinations in the United States by the National Trust for Historic Preservation®. Natchitoches' historic commercial district is a 2006 winner of a Great American Main Street Award®, sponsored by the National Trust Main Street Center™, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation®.

The picturesque city of Natchitoches is the oldest town in the Louisiana Purchase. Every year, thousands visit Natchitoches and its cultural functions, which include: Melrose Arts and Crafts Festival, Folk Festival, Fall Tour of Homes and the world-famous Christmas Festival.

Mariner's Restaurant was founded by Joe, Bennie, Don and Jennifer Nichols in 1983. They operated the restaurant until 1990, at which time, Joe and Bennie retired. Don, Jennifer and their daughter, Lyssa Kirk, continue to operate the restaurant to this day.

Mariner's has become the restaurant of choice for those of discriminating tastes, wishing to experience the culinary fame of Louisiana. No where this side of New Orleans, can you find a better example of Louisiana's culinary reputation than at the Mariner's of Natchitoches.

The Nichols family, managers & staff all wish you a delightful experience whenever you visit the restaurant. We continue to strive to make your satisfaction our number one goal. Your patronage and support are greatly appreciated!

MARINER'S Restaurant

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