

The Little Known Of New



French Quarter Orleans

By Jenna Intersimone

Jackson Square is considered the heart of the French Quarter. (Photography Jenna Intersimone)



New Orleans can seem to be a decidedly un-luxurious place. The city that began its life in 1718 as the dump site for French convicts and prostitutes hasn't changed so much today, as it remains a well-known capital for alcohol, sex and debauchery.

However, these aren't the only things that the Louisiana city is defined by, which is why over nine million people visit New Orleans every year. It's also a town where tourists and locals alike savor fine Creole and Cajun cuisine, explore historical architecture in many forms and dance to jazz music on every street corner.

Even though New Orleans in its entirety cannot be categorized in the same opulence as cities such as Paris or Dubai, I realized, through my recent trip to the legendary destination, that luxury does exist within the city limits, and in quite great amounts. If you're looking to visit the rogue Southern city, see the splendor that I discovered within New Orleans, through accommodations, dining, drink and attractions.

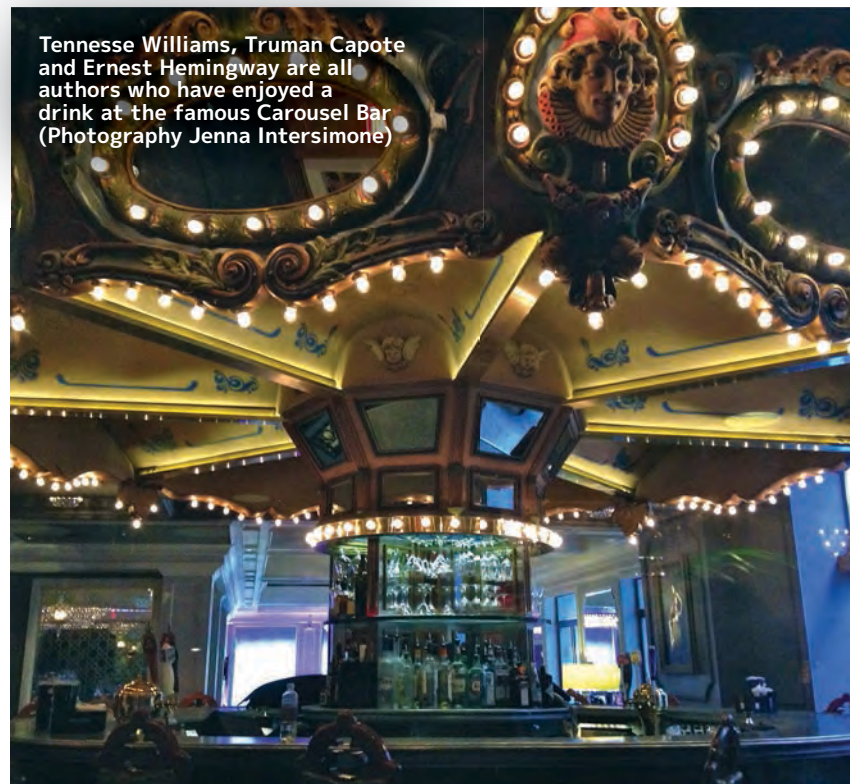
The first step in enjoying a taste of luxury as a traveler is choosing refined accommodations. The Audubon Cottages is one such lodging that I came across which offers distinctive quarters – a collection of seven one and two-

bedroom lavish suites, dating back to the early 1800s, which are at the heart of the French Quarter, only one block away from Bourbon Street. Each cottage boasts private access with a private feel, yet still retaining great proximity to everything that New Orleans has to offer. Plus, all guests have access to what is believed to be the oldest pool in the city, which is set in original brick and is surrounded by abundant foliage and wrought iron seating, a classic New Orleans staple. What I found most enticing was that the Audubon Cottages differ from a generic, plush hotel in that each cottage holds its own story, history and background, some of which include local haunts.

Although the city prides itself on many historical fine-dining establishments, I was most enthralled by the Court of Two Sisters, a restaurant quite literally bedded in a secluded and quiet courtyard between Bourbon and Royal Street. The location that was once home to five governors, two state Supreme Court justices, a future justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, and a future President of the United States is now surrounded by charming fairy lights, various humming fountains and, of course, incredible classic New Orleans cuisine. Some of my Court of Two Sisters favorites include turtle soup au sherry, grilled alligator sausage and bananas foster, which also involves an impressive show at the table.



The Audubon Cottages are said to hold the oldest pool in New Orleans. (Photography Audubon Cottages)



Tennessee Williams, Truman Capote and Ernest Hemingway are all authors who have enjoyed a drink at the famous Carousel Bar (Photography Jenna Intersimone)



The Garden District is considered the most expansive collection of historical southern mansions in the United States. (Photography Jenna Intersimone)



The Court of Two Sisters sits between Bourbon and Royal Streets in the French Quarter. (Photography Lindsey Irwin)



The Audubon Cottages feature seven luxury one- and two-bedroom suites. (Photography Audubon Cottages)

As anyone who has ever visited New Orleans knows, this city loves its bars. Whether it's a famous jazz club, a tiny dive bar or a historical destination, New Orleans is simply spellbound with the possibility of exceptional drinks at every corner. One corner that can't be missed is the famous Carousel Bar at the Hotel Monteleone, a 64-year-old lobby lounge that once inspired the likes of Ernest Hemingway, Truman Capote, Tennessee Williams and William Faulkner. As the only revolving bar in New Orleans, I adored the slow rotation of the historical bar, which also features live nightly entertainment. Today, it is also a popular spot for celebrities such as Michael Jordan, Dennis Quaid, Greg Allman and Sally Struthers.

When visiting the untamed French Quarter, it can be difficult to remember that people actually live in the loud city of New Orleans. However, the opulent Garden

District reminds visitors of just that. As a neighborhood of the city that is, in part, a National Historic Landmark, it is considered one of the best-preserved arrangements of notable southern mansions in the United States. One of my favorite spots in the city, the Garden District is a lovely and romantic mix of pastel homes, remarkable history and tremendous, colorful gardens making for an enchanting destination that shouldn't be missed. Anne Rice, Peyton Manning, Nicholas Cage and Sandra Bullock are just a few of the well-known celebrities who call the Garden District home. After sampling the quiet fountains, detailed wrought-iron fences and understated statues, it is easy to see why the District is a chosen spot.

Considered the heart of the French Quarter of New Orleans, Jackson Square, named in honor of the Battle of New Orleans hero Andrew Jackson, is a historic locale

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Jackson Square is named for the Battle of New Orleans hero Andrew Jackson. (Photography Jenna Intersimone)

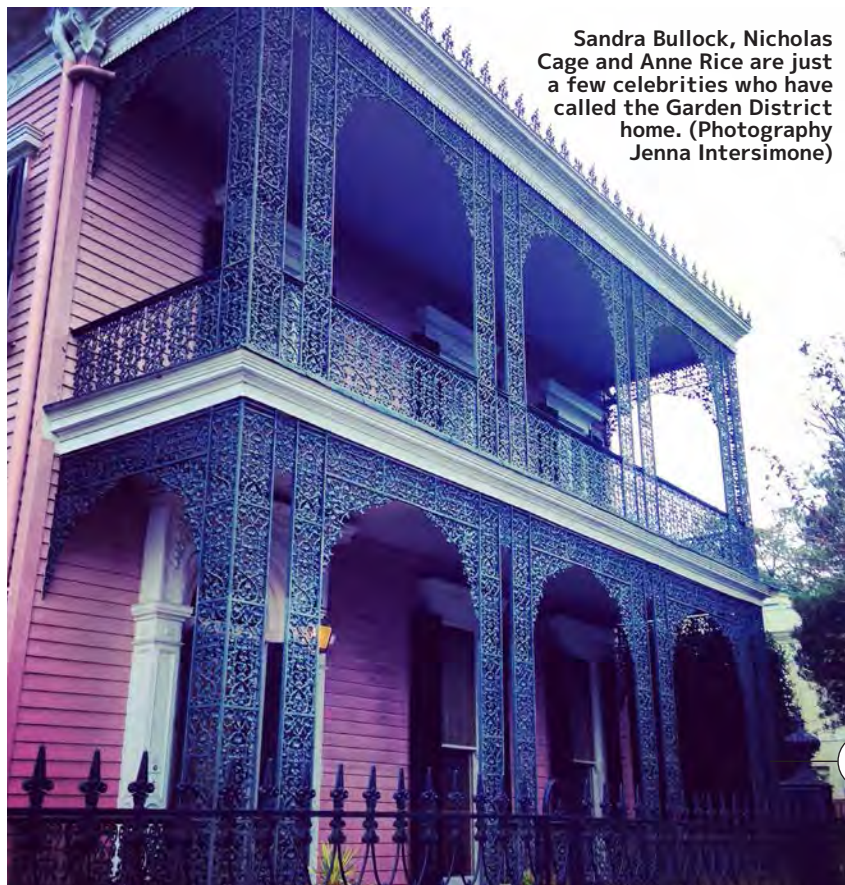
RIGHT
The Carousel Bar sits within the Hotel Monteleone. (Photography Jenna Intersimone)



overlooked by the St. Louis Cathedral. A favorite spot for visitors and locals. It's no secret why – the green square is embedded with culture. It calls the Presbytere, Cabildo and Pontalba Apartments its neighbors and it is also the hub of local city artists. The wrought-iron fence wrapping around the square is where generations of artists have displayed their portraits, paintings, drawings and creations for cultural minds to savor.

When first hearing of what New Orleans had to offer, I found it difficult to believe that luxury existed within the southern destination. However, after my visit, I found that the city, enamored with art, music, architecture and fine dining, is in addition, a hub of cultural opulence and incredible history that deserves a visit from those with finer tastes.

Sandra Bullock, Nicholas Cage and Anne Rice are just a few celebrities who have called the Garden District home. (Photography Jenna Intersimone)



The Court of Two Sisters is quite literally embedded within a courtyard of fairy lights and fountains. (Photography Jenna Intersimone)

