



*Louisiana*

A DREAM STATE



Adventurers have been drawn to the mouth of the Mississippi River for a long time, for as long as the human mind has been free to wander, as a river wanders, and to dream, as only we can do.

Some of them, the earliest comers, were drawn to the region's game and wildlife.

Others were drawn to the broad fertile banks of the great river boulevard and its vast green confluences. Still others sought its distant source.

They came, bringing with them their odd habits and curious ways. They planted their flags, ten of them in all. And seed. And cultivated prodigious plantations of sugar cane, cotton, and rice. They built a nation, or what might have been, had the state not been admitted to the Union in 1812.

When they left, they left their mark. The speculators and the settlers. The prospectors, promoters, pirates and priests.

They crisscrossed oceans and continents seeking the river's mouth, which was both a jumping off place and a destination for many far-fetched journeys and fortune-making schemes.

They waded, paddled and poled upstream and down to explore the river's lush lower reaches, and the heartland beyond, sometimes finding only virgin forests while fervently looking for gold, which was not there.

It's a history with a colorful cast of characters. The Spaniard Hernando de Soto was one of the first. The Frenchman Cavalier de LaSalle claimed all of it for Louis XIV. Sieur de Bienville. Bernardo de Galvez. Henry Miller Shreve and Zachary Taylor. Andrew Jackson and the pirate Jean LaFitte. It's a crazy succession of colonial clashes and claims. In it Indian, French, Spanish, Acadian, African, Anglo and American mix and mingle, swap and trade, improvise and refine a life and culture that is unique in this country, indeed, on the face of the earth. Add to this milieu, Italians, Irish, Germans, Yugoslavs and Orientals and you have some idea of how compelling the region has always been.

All of them were drawn to the paradise that lies around every river bend and the rainbow at its end.

Today, that promised land is the state of Louisiana and it's still one of the continent's great natural attractions. And more than ever, its towns and cities are haunted with old glories and yesterday's dreams.



Louisiana really is a dream state with its unique history, food, music and natural beauty. You will find our people hospitable and friendly, and I invite you to come meet us. In 1984, the whole world will be coming to our state for the Louisiana World Exposition. Enjoy a visit now and come back in 1984.

*Louis C. Thren*





## MAGICAL WATER



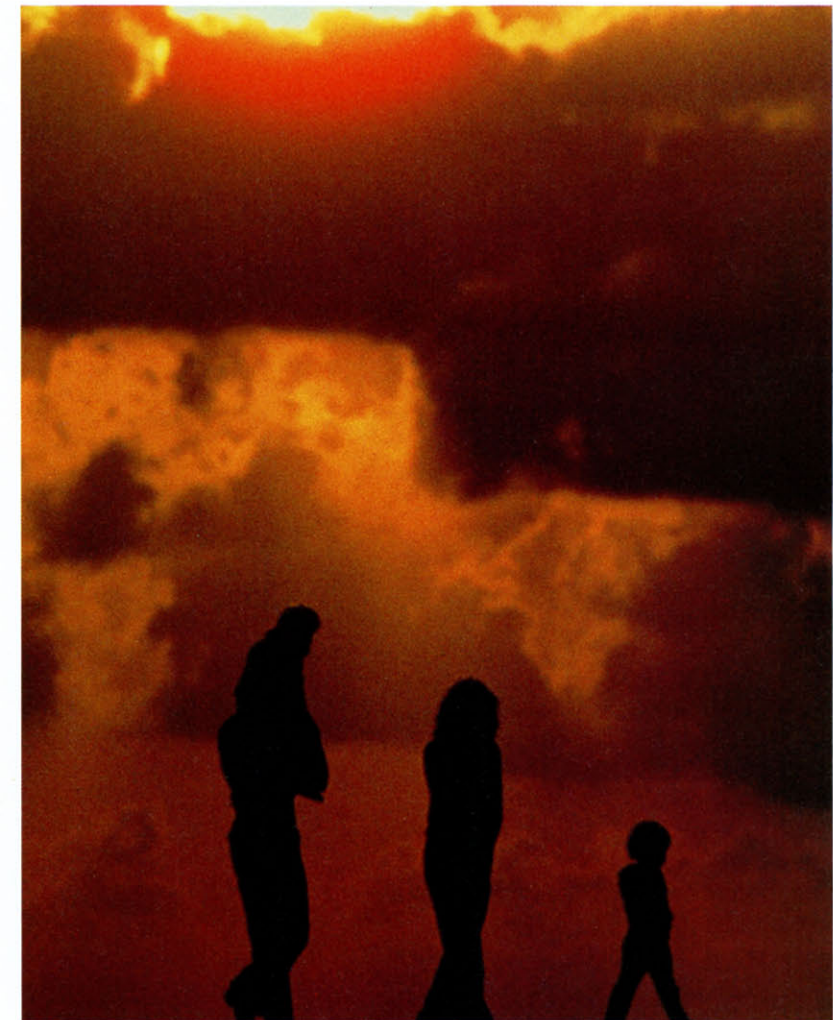
When America bought the Purchase in 1803 it was largely a wilderness, unpopulated, uncultivated, uncut. Today, it's one of America's last, great unspoiled aquatic playgrounds. As one contemporary puts it, Louisiana is, perhaps, the nation's best world-class theme park where the central attraction is water.

Water. It's everywhere in Louisiana. Hill country lakes. Piney woodland streams. Vast cypress forests, standing knee deep in dark still waters. Wet grassland flats. Canals and bayous with old world names; Bayou Lafourche, Bayou Teche, Tensas, D'Arbonne, Lacassine... And rivers. Louisiana is their province, perhaps, the richest in North America; the Sabine, the Calcasieu, the rusty Red with its white sand beaches, the Ouachita, the awesome Atchafalaya, which may again change the course of things in the state, the Tchefuncte, the Tangipahoa, the Pearl. But the old man river, the mighty Mississippi, is the source of everything in Louisiana and keeps the landscape productive and bathed in yellow green.

The moody blue Gulf of Mexico is the state's weather maker, and no doubt, has a lot to do with the atmosphere of the place and its semi-tropical moods.

The people at large are warm, hospitable and friendly because the sun dominates here and adds intensity to the water-washed colors that always fill its skies.

Now there are no mountains in Louisiana, only gentle hills and serpentine levees. But frequently, mountainous banks of cumulus cloud build over the open Gulf and appear to encircle the region with distant towering Himalayas. Look! They appear snow-capped. Look again, and they are gone.





Frequently, the Gulf sends inland warm soaking showers that run off, fill, and spill back into the Gulf. That's the state's seasonal cycle. But anything in tempo with the weather in Louisiana quickly changes, including fisherman's luck.

Now fishing in Louisiana is a tradition, a business, a faith, a sport, a feast, a fever, a pastime, and sometimes, a frustration—but not for long.

Fish in astonishing variety and number are in silent abundance throughout the state's waterways, and the Gulf is their food rich kingdom, a paradise for fishermen who troll the deep.

Boats, too, are an important part of life in the state. People take boating seriously. From piloting super cargo ships, paddle-wheelers, tugs, trawlers, sailboats and swamp buggies to pirogues. To many people in Louisiana a small boat around the place is equivalent to a second car. To others sailing and ocean racing are a passion.

Those who don't boat, boatwatch from every lookout, bank, bridge and shore. Boatwatching takes up a big part of many people's time across the state. As does wildlife and bird watching in the state's backyards and waterland preserves.











## A LOVE STORY

One of the heaviest, continuous romances in Louisiana is carried on between horselovers and their steeds. Horses are everywhere. Every meadow, every dry hummock, even the river levees are their grazing ground. And grazing horses, like dancing water, lend excitement and grace to the scene.

So horsewatching, too, is a big local preoccupation, including the passionate pursuit of the sport of kings. There are five major race tracks in the state and countless smaller ones, where the thundering drum of racing thoroughbreds is part of the daily double dream.



For nostalgia buffs Louisiana is a sentimental journey, a heart throbbing dream. Many travellers come to peer at the state's period classics, faded fads, and the finest and fanciest of antiques. They marvel at the wild procession of fashion, and lifestyles, from top cream to crude, from sequin-spangled Indians to star-spangled blacks. Here grand European flourishes mate with great American funk.





CAMERA. SPEED! ACTION!

It's easy to get the impression that something in Louisiana turns people into incurable shutterbugs. The state's superstitions say it's the early morning mists or the Atchafalaya moon. Whatever the case, those drawn to the state by photography never want to leave. Many don't.

The picture possibilities are seemingly endless in the wilds and watering holes, the courtyards and gardens of the state. It's an album of old frontier days in Natchitoches, rose gardens in Shreveport, alligators and roseate spoonbills near Lake Charles, Catahoula hog dogs, Spanish moss and magnolia in Baton Rouge.

It's a close-up of costumes, characters and caricatures. Of cotton fields and wild flowers up near Monroe, piney woods around Alexandria, rice fields outside Lafayette, Ruston peach groves, New Iberia sugarcane fields. It's a picture of picture takers and people watching people with or without a lens.









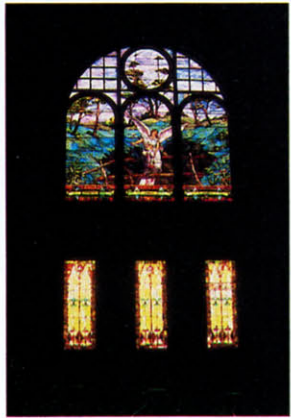
**WHEELING OVER WATER:  
WALKING ON AIR**

Touring rural Louisiana is perhaps the ultimate dream. Best seen driven leisurely over narrow winding back roads in sleek road-hugging cars; complete with ferryboat rides, church spires and yellow biplanes in the sky.

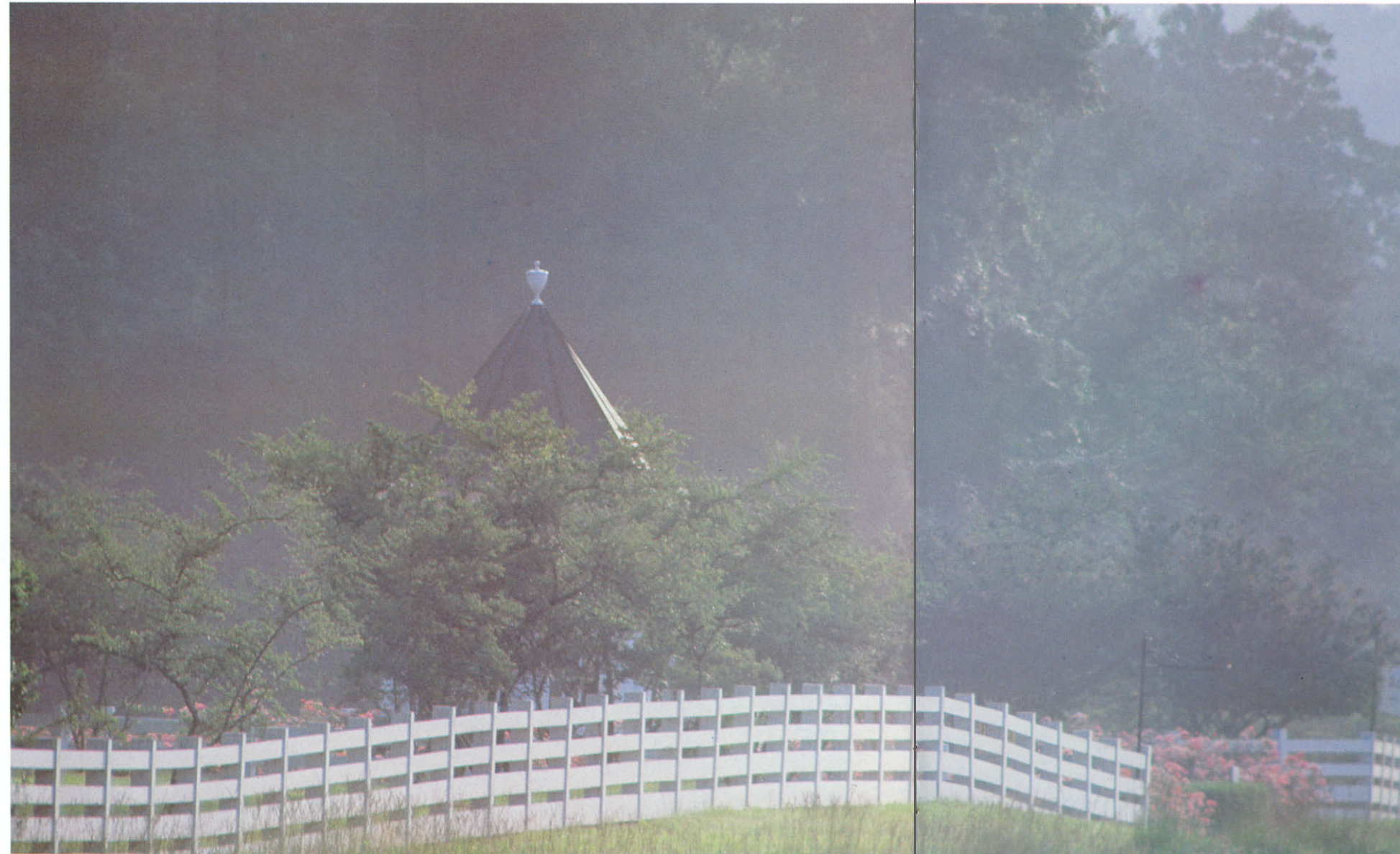
To plugged in, high-tech, high-strung travellers, it's a caper, a great escape to a land that is different, an escape to exotic change. There are miles and miles of wooded hill country roads that take you over ancient Indian hunting grounds and past country stores, filling stations and roadside stands little changed from the way they were 50 to 60 years ago. Highspeed causeways, and soaring bridges leapfrog from upland to wetland, from plantation to parish seat, which is what they call counties in the state. Many parishes carry the names of foreign places, forgotten personages and patron saints: Feliciana, St. Tammany, Ascension, Catahoula, St. Mary, Sabine, St. John the Baptist, Terrebonne.

Wherever you go, whatever route you take, expect the unexpected. Feasts, folklore and festivals. It's almost like being in a foreign country. Entertaining. Unique.

The surest way to discover Louisiana is to venture out on foot. The landscape is ideal for walking or bicycling, or jogging, or gawking at discoveries that only you can make. Around every bend in the river and behind every facade. Strike out along the state's nature trails to get back to basics. Stroll down well-worn walks and alleys or historic districts to sense the charisma of the place.













MUSICAL DIALECTS

The best way to understand the region is to listen to the people and their songs. Listen to them in the streets, in their parlors and on their porches. English prevails in many strange dialects, always vivid and easy on the ear. But French is spoken in Acadiana by both whites and blacks. You'll hear Spanish spoken in some quarters, and often a patois with sounds and shades of them all.

And the music? Well, Louisiana music is a language unto itself. The joy of jazz is universal. The whole world sings its blues. It's spontaneous. Unpretentious. Hot-blooded and original. As the people who make it. And it's everywhere they are. The cajun fiddlers, the country pickers, the plinkers, the tooters, the tappers and the wailers, all are at home in Louisiana and —at the drop of a hat—will perform.

Their music bursts in fascinating rhythms out from under every door, through every window, from every honky-tonk and dance hall. It marches down the middle of the street and soft shoes at the curb. Music fills the Confederate jasmine scented air. It's a dream world set to music, and the music, like the river, keeps rockin' and rollin' on.







Louisiana houses are as original as its music and are among the most livable structures in the world. Not only the spacious mansions and elegant plantations, but the manors and the cottages as well. Even swamp shacks and humble cabins have an original charm.

Many of these buildings have stood for more than a hundred years and will stand several hundred more. They were built of solid, native cypress. They were carefully framed and fitted to provide a family the best for generations and to weather nature's worst.

Linger in these old houses for a while and sit beneath ancient trees, or, better yet, stay overnight in one of the plantations open to guests. It will make you stop and wonder, as you look around historic ground, What mysteries would be unraveled? What secrets would be spilled? If only sturdy walls and ancient oaks could prattle and talk.







Legend holds, the good and righteous in Louisiana don't go to Heaven, but to the big kitchen in the sky. Glory. Hallelujah. Where the chefs are creole, soul and cajun. And the food is always piled high. Or served in continental fashion, as you like it. Or strictly southern country style. Where there's always something bubbling on the back burner, seafood gumbo, meat pies, red beans and rice. And it's always done just right. No doubt about it, Louisiana cooking makes eating twice the pleasure, and living twice as nice.

Maybe it's because of the succulent seafoods so abundant in the state: gulf trout, pompano, redfish and snapper. Catfish, crab, crawfish and oysters. Fresh caught, nearby. Or maybe it's the piquant choices of French sauces, Spanish spices, country seasonings and soul food herbs. Or could it be that rare worldly spirit known to travellers as "lagniappe." A spirit of giving an extra pinch to the pot or a little something extra to your guests. Whatever it may be, Louisiana cooks concoct a cuisine unlike any other that people from all over the world flock to eat.









## WAY DOWN YONDER

If the river is the benevolent source of everything in Louisiana, then the city of New Orleans is its crown. New Orleans is an old city. It's been a landing for travellers for hundreds of years. Still, its lights never fail to trigger a rush of excitement and anticipation.



The city itself is a golden gate. A statue of liberty. Not because of its size; it's a small city, built on a human scale. And not because of its monuments and shrines, though the city has many. But rather, because of the soulful good will of its people. They are worldly. Tolerant. And sensitive to others, especially weary travellers in need of a little camaraderie, comfort, revelry and pleasure.

That's way down yonder in the land of dreams...



Louisiana has many attractions. Many are famous. So visitors expect to find a lot. And do.

Fortunately, some are not so famous. In fact, some of the best attractions are places where people go to do nothing. Nothing, that is, except relax. Refresh. Reflect and dream.





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