Welcome to New Orleans!

Tourism is the lifeblood of our city – we host more than 10 million people a year. But New Orleans and its many distinct neighborhoods are not theme parks; we are a living, breathing city with people from all walks of life. With ever more people enjoying our city’s traditions, music, performances, and festivals, it’s especially important to share the most sustainable ways to participate in and support our culture. These suggestions will help preserve the culture and traditions we love and will make your visit even more enjoyable.

We strive to empower the New Orleans music and cultural community through collective self-representation advocating in the interests of cultural preservation, perpetuation, and positive economic impact.

MaCCNO is a broad-based coalition working to empower, assist, and organize New Orleans’ cultural community, with a particular focus on advocating for ‘culture friendly’ laws and public policy. We aim to help formalize protections for our culture and provide ongoing advocacy, research, information sharing, and outreach to ensure New Orleans musicians, artists, and culture bearers can not only continue their cultural practices, but also maintain a high quality of life.

To learn more and to donate, please visit us at maccno.com

Cover Photo: Kate Gegenheimer, MarignyPhotography.com

The Music and Culture Coalition of New Orleans (MACCNO) has put together this guide with tips for you to enjoy and support our unique culture while also being responsible and respectful.
WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Although New Orleans is one of the unique cities in the world, in many ways we are a city like any other; full of people living their daily lives going to work, school, and worship. Parts of the city that are tourist destinations are also neighborhoods, not theme parks. Enjoy! But please also be respectful of your neighbors.

- Say “Hello!” New Orleanians are notoriously friendly. When you pass people it’s okay to greet them.

- Have a great time in our wonderful restaurants, bars and clubs but don’t bring the party home, especially if you are staying outside of the Central Business District.

- If you are enjoying a street performance, someone’s artwork or cultural traditions like Mardi Gras Indians, ALWAYS ask if you can take a picture and NEVER sell images without the subject’s permission.

- If you stop to watch a performance, please leave space for people to pass by easily.

- During a musical performance, please move to the back for conversation to avoid talking loudly near the band.

- Flash photography during a show is distracting for the performers. Please turn off your flash.

- Please do not ask to sit in with the band, even if you are a musician.

- If you want to take pictures of our beautiful city, for traffic safety, please park your car or pull over to get your shot.

- Keep a sharp eye out for bicyclists. Bikes often go the wrong way on streets or have no lights at night.

- Don’t walk in the street unless you’re sure it’s closed to cars. Cars don’t always stop for pedestrians in cross walks. Be extra careful about your safety when drinking.

THE TRUTH ABOUT TIPPING

Culture and tourism are our livelihoods. In a city that brings in over $7 billion a year in tourism revenue, those of us fueling the industry and culture – musicians, artists, performers, and hospitality workers – frequently make a living and support our families on tips alone. In Louisiana minimum wage for those making tips is only $2.13/hour. Please remember to tip when you go out, and make sure to have cash on you.

Please also bear in mind that many music venues pay only a small part of musicians’ pay and the rest comes from the audience.

SOME BASIC TIPPING GUIDELINES

- Bands/Performers in a Bar or Club: A good rule is $5/per person in your party, per set, if there is no cover charge. Even if there is a cover charge, the amount bands receive varies widely, so adding to the tip bucket ensures they will be compensated for their time and skills.

- Food Servers, Tour Guides, Taxi and Pedicab Drivers, Tattoo Artists/Piercers, Fortune Tellers: 20–25% is now standard.

- Bartenders, Baristas, and Bellhops: $1 per beer/basic cocktail/coffee/suitcase, more for anything more laborious.

- Hotel Cleaning Staff: $5/night for double occupancy room, left on a pillow or nightstand.

- Bands/Performers on the Street: Street performers ARE NOT paid by the city. If you stop, please leave at least a dollar, and a good rule of thumb is the longer you stay, the more you pay.

OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT THE CULTURE OF NEW ORLEANS

If you like what you hear and see, bring the experience home by purchasing CDs, T-shirts and other merchandise from performers and artists. Follow bands and musicians on social media and introduce their music to your friends.

OUR PARADING CULTURE

WE LOVE A PARADE.
WE HOPE YOU ENJOY A SECOND LINE, HOLIDAY PARADE OR OTHER CELEBRATION WHILE YOU’RE HERE. MANY OF OUR PARADES ARE PARTICIPATORY, BUT IF YOU WANT TO JOIN IN, IT’S BEST TO STAY TOWARD THE BACK AND OUT OF THE WAY OF THE BAND AND PARADE MEMBERS. DON’T BLOCK THE PATH OF THE GRAND MARSHAL AND THE BAND OR JUMP IN FRONT TO TAKE PHOTOS. IF SOMEONE ASKS YOU TO MOVE, PLEASE DO SO. MAKE SURE YOU SUPPORT BARS, BUSINESSES, AND VENDORS ALONG THE ROUTE—IT’S PART OF THE FUN!

BE RESPECTFUL OF RITUAL PROCESSIONS, LIKE JAZZ FUNERALS. ENJOY AND OBSERVE FROM THE PERIMETER. IT’S DISRESPECTFUL TO INTERFERE WITH THE RITUAL FOR A PHOTOGRAPH.