

# LAGNIAPPE

## {lan•yap}

A little something extra. A free coffee or dessert or a few extra ounces of boudin put the “bons” in “bons temps.”

## { WHAT'S GOING ON }

**CAJUN** Nickname for Acadians, the French-speaking people who migrated to Louisiana from Nova Scotia, starting in 1755.

**FUNK** da Meters

**JAZZ** Louis Armstrong said, “If you gotta ask, you’ll never know.” So much for a definition. As for origin, some say it was a New Orleans barber named Buddy Bolden, who in 1891 blew a few hot notes with his cornet and invented a new form of music that’s been an American favorite since the Jazz Age of the ‘20s. Jazz mixes African and Creole rhythms with European styles. Surprisingly, the Irish, Germans, and Italians contributed the brass bands.

## { WHATCHA SAYIN' }

**FAIS-DO-DO** {FAY-doe-DOE} It means, “Put the kids to sleep.” And party hearty. In the old days, when Cajuns would celebrate, they brought the kids with their blankies so the little ones could snooze while adults would eat, drink, and dance their way through the night.

**GRIS-GRIS** {gree-gree} “X” marks the spot. Voodoo spells, often indicated by Xs, are still found on tombs like that of legendary voodoo queen Marie Laveau.

**GUMBO YA-YA** “Everybody talking at once.”

**LAGNIAPPE** {LAN-yap} A little something extra. A free coffee or dessert or a few extra ounces of boudin put the “bons” in “bons temps.”

**LAISSEZ LES BONS TEMPS ROULER!** {less-SAY lay bon TONH roo-LAY} Let the good times roll.

**MAKIN' GROCERIES** Shopping for groceries. What you do before whipping up some gumbo.

**PASS A GOOD TIME** Live it up.

**PRO BONO PUBLICO** “For the common good,” motto of Rex, King of Carnival.



## { WHAT'S DAT }

**610 STOMPERS** Started in the Summer of 2009, this manly dancing troupe and their trademark facial hair rose to infamy during the 2010 Saints Super Bowl celebrations. Their motto “Ordinary Men. Extraordinary Moves” says it all about these unique gentlemen.

**Brass Band** No not the Marine or Navy bands, New Orleans Brass Bands carry on a long tradition including such greats as Louis Armstrong and the Marsalis Family. Their mobile instruments work perfectly for second-lines or late night jazz clubs around the city.



**DANCINGMAN 504** Dancing Man, also known as Darryl Young, is a Second Line enthusiast and teacher, who teaches New Orleans parade culture to students of all ages. He is a frequent fixture at parades and festivals, always dancing up a storm. Be sure to ask about his classes, and learn New Orleans culture from a true expert!

**FLAMBEAUX** Dating back to the earliest days of Mardi Gras, Flambeaux were originally slaves or free men of color who lit the way for parades, receiving coins for the efforts from revelers. Today, the tradition has evolved into a rich display of daring showmanship, rivaled only by the parades themselves.

**KREWE** Members of a carnival organization, as in Krewe of Rex. A variation of "crew," the word was invented by 19th-century New Orleanians, who privately bankrolled the balls and parades (as is still the case).

### Mardi Gras Indians

Those guys in the big, feathery costumes actually trace their lineage to the original Native Americans living in southeastern Louisiana and some of the first Africans arriving around the turn of the 19th Century. You can see them dressed and singing their traditional music, which stems from African drum circles, "All on a Mardi Gras Day."



**Secondline** The people who follow a brass band on the street while swinging a handkerchief in a circle over their heads. These second-liners also have a special shuffle step or dance they do when following the band. This is called "secondlining."

**PICAYUNE** Old Spanish coin, 1/8 of a dollar. Connotes something really small or petty.

**PIROGUE** Shallow canoe used in the bayous.

**TAMBOURINE LADY** Born Rosalie Washington, the Tambourine Lady can be found playing her iconic instrument alongside almost every musical act in New Orleans, from the Gospel Tent at Jazzfest to Wednesdays in Lafayette Square, always bringing her spectacular style and unique vibrancy to the stage.

**VOODOO** From voudun, meaning "god," "spirit," or "insight" in the Fon language of Dahomey. Voodoo came from the West African Yoruba religion via Haiti, where African practices mingled with the Catholicism of French colonists.

**YAT** A local denizen. Named for the Ninth Ward greeting, "Where y'at?"

## WHERE Y'AT

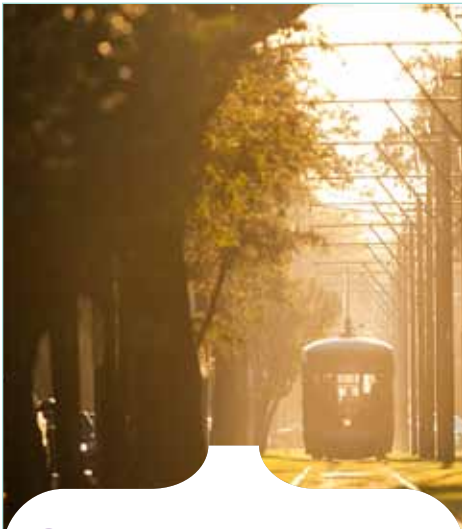
**BANQUETTE** Sidewalk.

**BAYOU** Choctaw for "small stream." It's a creek with a slow current, flowing from a river or lowland lake, often through swamp areas, usually in a delta region. Among its many nicknames, Louisiana is called "The Bayou State" for its beautiful wetland regions.

### Cities of the Dead

New Orleans cemeteries. Because of the high water table, we spend the afterlife buried above ground instead of six feet under it. Elaborate monuments cluster together like small communities.





**Streetcar** New Orleans' name for the world's oldest continuously operating electric street railway. In 1835, a steam engine train ran from the Vieux Carré along St. Charles to the outlying town of Carrollton (now the Uptown Riverbend area). In the 1860s, the route became a horseand mule-drawn line, and went electric in 1893. Today, over 20,000 people a day ride to work and play aboard 35 original electric cars (available for private parties), all named to the National Register of Historic Places. You can get to a historic place riding in a historic place. Only in New Orleans.

**DIRECTIONS** There is no West, East, North, or South in New Orleans. We head uptown, downtown, lakeside and riverside. And anywhere the music is.

**FAUBOURG** {FOE•burg} As in "Faubourg Marigny." Originally suburbs, they are now neighborhoods near the French Quarter. (The Vieux Carré once defined the entire city of New Orleans.)

**ISLEÑOS** {iz•LAY•nyos} Islanders; in this case, Spanish settlers from the Canary Islands. Since 1799, they've been fishermen, trappers, and master boat builders in Louisiana. You can find them downriver, in St. Bernard Parish.

**NEUTRAL GROUND** When the Americans arrived in New Orleans after the

Louisiana Purchase of 1803, Europeans and Creoles who inhabited the French Quarter (then, the entire city of New Orleans) considered them unwelcome interlopers. So the immigrants settled across Canal Street and established what is now the Central Business and Arts District. Canal Street became the "neutral ground" in the clash of cultures. Ever since, New Orleans has been a city sans medians. Here, we have only neutral grounds. In case you're wondering, cars parked on the raised neutral grounds mean only one thing: nearby parades.

**NEW ORLEANS** Pronounced **noo AW•lins** or **new OR•lins** or **new OR•lee•yuns**, but not **new or•LEENS**. Unless referring to the street or the parish of or-leens. Or when you're singing. Confused yet?

**PARISH** Equivalent of a county in the other 49 states.

### Vieux Carré {YVEUH kah•RAY}

Literally, "Old Square" or "Old Quarter," it refers to the French Quarter. Before it was "Old," "French," or a "Quarter" of any kind, the area was just the "Ville," the entire city of New Orleans. Today, its 90 city blocks hold about 2,700 European and Creole-style buildings, most with a long and fascinating history.



**Beignet** {BEN•yay} Creole pastries carrés (square, like the Vieux Carré), fried to crusty perfection and generously sprinkled with powdered sugar. Got café au lait? Tip: wear light colors to camouflage the powdered sugar.

**STREET NAMES** We've got some strange pronunciation. A sample:

**Burgundy** {bur•GUN•dee}

**Conti** {CON•tie}

**Calliope** {KAL•ee•ope}

**Melpomene** {MEL•puh•meen}

**Tchoupitoulas** {CHOP•ih•too•liss}

**Clio** {CLEE•oh} but often misread as C-L 10. Honest.

**SWAMP** A low, marshy wetland, heavily forested and subject to seasonal flooding.

## { WHATCHA EATIN' }

**ANDOUILLE** {ahn•DOO•ee} Spicy Cajun sausage. Don't ask what's in it. Just savor the burn.

**ANGELO BROCATO** Ices and creams. Some say pistachio; others say lemon ice. Two words: rum custard. Oh, goodness.

**BANANAS FOSTER** Brennan's first whipped up this flaming ambrosia of bananas and rum, spooned over vanilla ice cream.

**BARQ'S** A great local root beer, served in glass bottles or frosty mugs. Washes down the seafood just fine.

**BLACKENED REDFISH** Highly seasoned redfish filets sizzled in a hot skillet. When Chef Paul Prudhomme made the Cajun dish a national craze, it put a strain on redfish supplies. Inspired chefs began blackening poultry and veal.

**BLUE RUNNER GUMBO TO GO** Canned okra and shrimp gumbo or gumbo base, beans, and other canned produce to take home. No muss.

**Crawfish Boil {a.k.a. Mudbugs or Crawdads}** Cooked with lots of crab boil, these succulent little second cousins to shrimp hold the flavor in the heads and the meat in the tails. So you suck the heads and peel the tails. Crawfish pies and Crawfish Monica, a creamy pasta dish, draw raves at Jazz Fest.



**Gumbo** New Orleans' and South Louisiana's signature Creole dish. Not an imitation of French bouillabaisse. "Gumbo" began with okra, or nkombo in Bantu, a vegetable of African origin. Native American filé (ground sassafras leaves) is the essential spice. Caribbean-born chefs, gens de couleur, first whipped up this piquant potage—more soup than stew. In Southern Louisiana, it's made with a dark roux (gravy base made by browning flour in fat), shellfish, and sausage, served over rice. In North Louisiana, the roux is lighter and the meat is venison, duck, or squirrel. But only if you're a good enough shot.

**BOUDIN** {boo-DEHN} Spicy pork sausage stuffed with onions and herbs.

**CAJUN VS. CREOLE** Cajun food is the earthy, robust creation of fishermen and farmers in the bayou country of southwest Louisiana. Creole food is the cosmopolitan cuisine of New Orleans, a mix of Europe, Africa and the Caribbean.

**CHICORY** {CHICK-er-ree} Endive roots are roasted and ground into Louisiana java labels like Community, French Market, Union, and Luzianne. It's coffee with a little bite that'll take the bark out of your morning. Indigenous coffee houses like C.C.'s and Café du Monde serve up N.O. local coffees all day and into the night.

**COURTBOUILLON** {COO-boo-yawn} Cajun for "short soup," it is fish simmered in spicy tomato sauce.

**CRAWFISH BOIL, CRAB BOIL, OR SHRIMP BOIL** The standard brands are Zatarain's and Rex. Why bother to boil if you don't do it right? Seafood gets a flavor jolt in these aromatic blends of spices and seasonings.

**CREOLE CREAM CHEESE** Once close to extinction, now making a comeback (Robert's Markets and Dorignac's Supermarket still carry it), it's close to France's light crème fraîche.

Add a little sugar or fruit, and breakfast will never be the same.

**CREOLE MUSTARD** More pungent than American mustard; the mustard seeds are ground coarsely into piquant nuggets rather than bland dust.

**DRESSED** A po-boy with lettuce, tomato, pickles, and mayo (locally known as "MY-nez," usually Blue Plate).

**King Cake** These racetrack-shaped cakes are served only between Twelfth Night (January 6, the Feast of the Three Kings) and Mardi Gras, the day before Ash Wednesday. Originally a version of French brioche, they are typically decorated in purple, green, and gold sugar. By tradition, whoever gets the piece with the tiny plastic baby or bean baked inside throws the next party and serves the next cake.



**ETOUFFÉE** {ay·too·FAY} It literally means “suffocated,” but in N.O. we just smother great shrimp or crawfish with spicy tomato sauce and slather it over rice. Very nice.

**JAMBALAYA** {jahm·ba·LIE·ya} New Orleans’ answer to Spain’s paella, this Cajun rice dish makes a clean sweep of the kitchen, full of sausage, seafood, and, of course, spices.

**MIRLITON** {MER·lih·tawn or MIL·lih·ton} A tropical, pear -shaped squash. Louisianans love to stuff them with seafood, meats, and cheese. Elsewhere, they’re called vegetable pears, chayotes, chochos, or christophines.

**MUFFULETTA** It’s not a sandwich; it’s a meal packed into a pizza -sized Italian bun. The calories don’t count when you’re having fun: salami, ham, and provolone lavished with olive relish. Go to the source: Central Grocery on Decatur Street, an Italian import

store where the sandwich was invented about a century ago to satisfy hungry Sicilian stevedores on the nearby docks.

**OYSTERS** Eating them raw on the half shell still separates the natives from the tourists, the shushi craze notwithstanding. Connoisseurs like to oversee the process, watching as the shells are pried open. Most natives dip them in a sauce made with ketchup, Tabasco, horseradish to taste and a squeeze of fresh lemon.

