



LOUISIANA'S
CAJUN BAYOU

LAFOURCHE PARISH

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

lacajunbayou.com

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



Dear Tourism Friends,

Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism remains committed to being a destination that fulfills its brand promise. Our goal is to attract visitation to Lafourche Parish by promoting our authentic Cajun communities, culture, food, attractions, and festivals & events. We continue to deliver on this promise through our marketing, sales, public relations, and visitor service programs. I am excited to share with you the accomplishments of 2023 and how we were successful in our goals.

Our hotel occupancy grew by 29% over 2019 (the last normal year prior to Covid-19). Hotel revenue also increased by 62% over 2019. Additionally, the average daily rate in our hotels (ADR) increased by 33%, and revenue per available room (RevPAR) increased by 70% over 2019. Although 2021 and 2022 saw record-breaking numbers due to the gas & oil industry and Hurricane Ida, 2023 marked a return to normalcy in travel and demand, while maintaining levels well above pre-pandemic times. Contributing factors to these pre-pandemic increases include pent-up travel demand, area festivals and events, Mardi Gras, group & business travel, and various sporting events.

In 2023, we continued to welcome visitors from across the globe, and our local tourism partners ran full steam ahead to support those efforts. Our marketing and communications remained a driving influence in educating potential visitors about Lafourche Parish. During 2023, our public relations efforts generated over 80 million media impressions. We executed a robust media plan comprising print, digital, TV, and social media advertising, resulting in increased website traffic, visitor guide downloads, and email newsletter subscribers. We also continued our award-winning marketing campaign titled "You Gotta Try This," showcasing the unique and authentic culinary culture of the parish, inviting visitors to come and experience all that Lafourche Parish has to offer. Additionally, we launched the revised Cajun Bayou Food Trail, featuring an all-new map, passport, and t-shirt, which generated over 1,400 meals in the parish. Furthermore, we successfully completed year two of the Acadian to Cajun partnership by taking Lafourche Parish to the Acadian Regions of Nova Scotia in-person, highlighting our two destinations through in-person outreach and strategic media placements.

Our organization was thrilled to receive the Louey Award from the Louisiana Travel Association for Campaign/Promotion of the Year for our Acadian to Cajun partnership and the Shining Example Award from the Southeast Tourism Society for Best Marketing – You Gotta Try This campaign. Our team has been hard at work meeting with tour operators, attending various tradeshow and industry conferences, and hosting groups and journalists. Our travel counselors provided area information to visitors and guests in our temporary center as we finalized plans for rebuilding our permanent center.

Louisiana's Cajun Bayou Tourism remains committed to our parish, partners, and community as our destination continues to move in a positive direction. We look forward to working hand-in-hand with you so that together, we can continue to position Lafourche Parish as a year-round tourism destination while enhancing the lives of all Lafourche Parish residents.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cody A. Gray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Cody A. Gray, President & CEO

MARKETING & PROMOTION



232
THOUSAND
Users on
lacajunbayou.com

24
PERCENT
Increase in traffic



Top states visiting
the website
Louisiana, Texas
Illinois & Alabama

12,117,185
Digital advertising impressions

56
PERCENT
Impression
increase

80
MILLION
People reached
through public relations



Featured in publications

THE GLOBE AND MAIL*

Forbes
Smithsonian
MAGAZINE

HGTV

SMARTERTRAVEL

**TRAVEL
AWAITS**

Social media
fans grew by

128
PERCENT
(combined)



60
THOUSAND
Total social audience

2.4
MILLION
Social media
advertising impressions



896

People came to the visitor center

Top Domestic Travelers:



Top International Travelers:



DOWNLOADS

5,300

Digital visitor guide

5
PERCENT
Increase in downloads



SENT

896

Printed visitor guides

21
PERCENT
Increase in printed requests



**CAJUN BAYOU
FOOD TRAIL**

10,245

Digital downloads of
map and passport

GENERATING 1,144 MEALS

SALES & OUTREACH

HOSTED

112 

Trade show and operator appointments

HOSTED

11 GROUPS
Generating

1,360 ROOM NIGHTS

ATTENDED

30 

Trade shows, conferences and professional meetings

GENERATED

18

Serious sales leads

4

Partner opportunities

SENT

32

Partner updates and newsletters



GENERATED

115,000

Outbound referrals to partner websites



GAINED

6,000

Subscribers to eNews database

+27% Increase

PROJECTS & EVENTS

CAJUN BAYOU
FOOD TRAIL
RE-LAUNCH



TOURISM
INVESTMENT PROGRAM



HOTEL OCCUPANCY

OCCUPANCY

2023 2019
51% 39.6%

Increase of

29.0
PERCENT

AVERAGE DAILY RATE

2023 2019
144.38 108.94

increase of

32.5
PERCENT

REVENUE PER AVAILABLE ROOM

2023 2019
73.60 43.17

increase of

70.5
PERCENT

TOURISM IMPACT



\$87 MILLION

in visitor spending

Tourism supports

1,000 JOBS

in Lafourche Parish

Tourism saves households

\$277 IN TAXES

each year

\$10 MILLION

in state and local taxes



Lafourche Parish is the

16TH LARGEST

visitor economy in Louisiana



AWARDS & RECOGNITION



**CAMPAIGN/PROMOTION OF THE YEAR
(ACADIAN TO CAJUN)**



**BEST MARKETING AWARD
(YOU GOTTA TRY THIS CAMPAIGN)**



ADDITIONAL 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

1. Hosted Laura Kiniry (Smithsonian) and Marsha Lederman (Globe and Mail)
2. Developed new relationships with Lafourche Parish Mardi Gras Krewe
3. LCB featured in Globe & Mail, Forbes, and Travel Awaits
6. Article from Laura Kiniry on Mardi Gras in Lafourche (Smithsonian Magazine)
7. Hosted Y'allStars Southern Skate Showdown and re-booked from 2024
8. Developed relationship with new BTNEP administration and assisted with Bayou Lafourche Cleanup
9. Received clean 2022 audit with A+ rating
10. Sponsored Twinning Association reception for visiting Loudun group
12. Executed partnership agreement for Lafourche Pavilion with Lafourche Parish Government
14. Implemented 2023 Tourism Investment Program and awarded 60K in funding
16. Hosted NTTW partner appreciation luncheon and Bayou Ambassador Awards
17. Presented Importance of Tourism presentation to Lockport Women's Club
18. Presented Importance of Tourism presentation to Lafourche Parish Council
19. Presented Importance of Tourism presentation to Thibodaux Kiwanis Club
20. Included in U.S. Travel NTTW recap book
21. Attended PRSA Conference for the first time
22. Received Certification in Hotel Industry Analytics (Cody)
23. Completed year two of STS Marketing College (Ian)
24. Completed year two of Nova Scotia Partnership
25. LPG issued proclamation for Acadian Heritage Day in Lafourche (newly created)
26. LCBT board issued resolution formally recognizing our partnership with Nova Scotia
27. Participated in NSU orientations
28. Included in Thanksgiving Article for HGTV with UVM of 9 million
29. Attended LA Food and Wine Fest with Chef to promote destination/culinary scene
30. Received appointment to Southeast Tourism Society Board of Directors (Cody)
31. Continued service on Louisiana Travel Association Board of Directors (Cody)
32. Completed service on Lafourche Chamber Board of Directors (Cody)
33. Completed Phase II of Wayfinding Signage Project
34. Hosted NSU vs. HCU Tailgate, in partnership with LOT
36. Created The Local Lafourche TV show on HTV10
37. Partnered with Lafourche Parish Government for Sports on the Bayou
38. Participated in Louisiana Goes Lone Star - Culinary Trails Program
40. New LCB Visitor's Center placed out to bid
41. Completed plans for new LCB Visitor's Center
42. Hired new Office/Finance Manager
43. Partnered with Tangi Tourism for NSU vs. SE Tailgate

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Marguerite Knight-Erwin, Chair

City of Thibodaux

Monique Crochet, Vice Chair

Lafourche Chamber of Commerce

Jeremy Punch, Secretary/Treasurer

Lafourche Chamber of Commerce

Amy Hebert

Thibodaux Chamber of Commerce

Donnell Zeringue

Cultural/Historical Organization

Josh Falgoust

Ward 6

Kristine Strickland

Ward 11

Kyle Williams

Town of Golden Meadow

Zina Sampey

Town of Lockport

STAFF

Cody A. Gray

President & CEO

Ian Wallis

Sales & Marketing Manager

Brandi Hebert

Office/Finance Manager & Administrative Assistant

Brenda Trosclair

Travel Counselor

John Adams

Travel Counselor

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