Perspectives on New Orleans: A Local Look

Members of the Spring Conference Host Committee shared with us their local perspectives on New Orleans. Read their unique takes on New Orleans, food, music, culture, and learning opportunities.

Scott S. Partridge
General Counsel and Senior VP, Bayer U.S. LLC

New Orleans native, Louis Armstrong, lyrically posed the question, “Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans?” I do, and so will you after spending only a few days in this unique town. Recognized as the most European of American cities, New Orleans is the birthplace of jazz, with a thriving, live-music scene that produced such legends as Jelly Roll Morton, Satchmo, Fats Domino, Mahalia Jackson, Irma Thomas, The Meters (and Neville-family spin offs), Dr. John, and Wynton Marsalis.

Founded over 300 years ago in 1718, New Orleans is a melting pot with cross-cultural roots. A favorite destination of foodies worldwide, The City That Care Forgot offers traditional or innovative Creole cuisine, as well as spicy Cajun fare from south Louisiana. The City’s architecture is diverse, with the Quarter boasting French and Spanish styles and the Garden District showcasing a collection of some of the best preserved mansions in the southern United States. You will be charmed by the local dialect and the laid back nature of the Big Easy residents.

When you visit the Crescent City, enjoy the food, music and dance, take a relaxing ride on the St. Charles streetcar (the oldest continuously running in the world); stroll past the antique shops on Magazine and Royal Streets during the day; and at night duck into the Old Absinthe House on Bourbon Street, the main “drag” through the Quarter, named not for the drink, but after the French ruling class. Take a short walk from your hotel and visit one of the highest-rated museums in the world, the National WWII Museum, and be moved by learning more about the “Greatest Generation.”

There is a “joie de vivre” found only in New Orleans. Some say New Orleanians talk too much, laugh too loud, and live too large. Come experience a special place where strangers say hello in crowded elevators and folks chat with you in grocery store aisles about their favorite red beans recipe. Spend a few days in my favorite town, and you, too, will know what it means to miss New Orleans!
Scott Partridge, Chair of our New Orleans Host Committee, is the General Counsel of Bayer U.S. Scott is also a member of the Section of Dispute Resolution’s Task Force on Innovative Conflict Prevention Techniques and a good friend of the Section. Scott may have left New Orleans, but New Orleans has never left Scott.

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Judy Perry Martinez

President, American Bar Association

As a born and raised New Orleanian, I treasure my city and all it has to offer. You likely know its great food, soulful music, endless festivals, stunning architecture, and fascinating history. But what keeps my husband and me here is its people. When you walk down the street in NOLA you will notice that the norm is for folks to say hello, give a smile or often even strike up a conversation with a stranger. It is how we are raised - no one is a stranger and we are all in this beautiful albeit sometimes challenging life together. That spirit of community and resilience is likely how our city has survived Hurricanes Betsy and Katrina, crime that has tried to destroy our neighborhoods, and bad calls on the football field. It is why our four children and their significant others love to come home often to visit and some have moved back. With all of its imperfections -- from sinking roads to millions of tons of trash covering the streets the day after Mardi Gras to our serious challenges to quality education -- we remain. We remain because New Orleans not only lets you be who you are, it celebrates who you are. And we will be celebrating all of you when you visit in April 2020.

Judy Perry Martinez of Simon, Peragine, Smith & Redfearn is the 2019-2020 president of the American Bar Association. Judy is a native of New Orleans and is very supportive of all of the Sections of the ABA. It is a very happy coincidence that we are holding our Spring Conference on Judy’s home turf.

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Lara E. White

My husband and I are not from New Orleans originally but we both chose to call it home decades ago after I graduated from Tulane University and Tulane Law School. We cannot imagine living anywhere else that is this unique and interesting. New Orleans has a level of culture that is matched only by much larger cities, but it is easy to navigate. It is a compact melting pot of history and cultural diversity that is always full of exciting things to do. If you enjoy music, then you will want to explore music venues on Frenchmen Street, Preservation Hall or Tipitina’s. If
you like history, you can’t miss the French Quarter and Jackson Square, the Pharmacy Museum (take the tour), WWII Museum, our above-ground cemeteries and the Garden District. If you want to explore the local art scene, the galleries on Royal, Julia and Magazine Streets are a must, as is the outdoor Besthoff Sculpture Garden and New Orleans Museum of Art at City Park. Of course our great restaurants and bars are too numerous to mention, but be sure to have beignets from Café du Monde, a muffuletta from The Central Grocery, Sunday brunch and plenty of oysters, crawfish and cocktails. If you need inspiration, just check out the Swiss Tourists’ YouTube video where Katrin and Janine expertly replicate Homer Simpson’s food tour of New Orleans (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKBgOrYbRLE). We look forward to your visit!

Lara E. White
Member, DR Section Spring Conference Host Committee

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A.J. Krouse

My favorite restaurant in New Orleans is Clancy’s, a popular restaurant with locals in uptown New Orleans.

Visitors must see the World War II Museum in the Warehouse District. Next door to the museum, please visit the new Higgins Hotel and its rooftop bar.

A.J. Krouse is member of the DR Section Spring Conference Host Committee

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Nancy Scott Degan

One of my favorite restaurants in New Orleans is Café Degas on Esplanade Avenue. Not only is the food delicious, the ambiance is unsurpassed. It is a small restaurant nestled among hundred-year old oak trees on one of the most beautiful streets in New Orleans, not far from where French Impressionist Master Edgar Degas lived in 1872-1873. The classic French cuisine is scrumptious, from appetizers to desserts!

Nancy Scott Degan is member of the DR Section Spring Conference Host Committee