

New Orleans at a social distance

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Tulanians new to New Orleans may be wondering how to see the sights while adhering to local restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here's a guide to some of the best Instagrammable views and sights around town that make it easy to social distance. So grab a mask and a selfie stick and take a walk around our colorful city.

A few reminders before you head out:

- The City of New Orleans requires masks in public, except during personal outdoor recreation.
- Restaurants, retail shops and museums are operating at 50% capacity, and may have additional booking restrictions.
- The Regional Transit Authority is requesting riders only use public transit for essential travel.
- Taxis and ride-sharing services are available with additional precautions: wear a mask, sit in the back seat, and keep windows rolled down for air circulation.
- These guidelines and the most up-to-date safety information for the City of New Orleans can be found at ready.nola.gov

French Quarter

Stroll through the French Quarter and take in all of the beautiful multi-level balconies and historic landmarks scattered throughout the iconic architecture and quaint shops. Plan a self-guided walking tour to explore and learn about the oldest neighborhood in New Orleans, courtesy of the [Historic New Orleans Collection](#). With brightly colored stoops and outdoor patios scattered around every corner, practically every block offers unique spots for a picturesque selfie.

Jackson Square and St. Louis Cathedral

St. Louis Cathedral in Jackson Square is one of the most iconic views of New Orleans. Take a walk around the square and see all of the colorful vendors and artists. Head up the stairs or ramp at Washington Artillery Park for the best view of the cathedral

and cross over to the Moonwalk and sit on the steps along the river to watch the steamboats pass by.

Accessibility note: ramps to the deck of Washington Artillery Park are available near the entrance closest to Café Du Monde.

Woldenberg Park

Right along the river, Woldenberg Park is home to the nearby Aquarium of the Americas and offers great views, public art, and wide walkways. Enjoy the ships floating by on the river or the monuments and sculptures scattered throughout the landscape. Ample bench seating all along the river make it a perfect spot to sit back after a walk around the French Quarter. Catch a shot of the Love Wins art installation near Toulouse Station, closer to the steps at the Moonwalk.

With Love from Nola

This botanical wall sculpture by local artists @lunabotanicals inside the Shops at Canal Place offers a lush backdrop for a selfie and a great spot to cool off inside. The wide, open walkways allow for easy social distancing and hand sanitizing stations are available throughout the mall. Retailers are open and operating at 50% capacity and many have easily visible signage help to maintain queues for occupancy.

Crescent Park

One of the newest parks in the city, [Crescent Park](#), offers some of the best views of the New Orleans skyline. The trail is perfect for jogging, a leisurely stroll or a picnic by the river. Park and enter by the “rainbow bridge” for the closest access to the scenic views on Piety Warf. Trees in the park are fairly young by New Orleans standards, so shade is limited. Keep visits to early morning or dusk to avoid the hottest part of the day. *Park Hours: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; open until 7 p.m. during daylight savings time.*

Accessibility note: The pedestrian bridge entrance on Piety is a step bridge crossing over the train tracks, which can be too steep for some patrons. Enter at Bartholomew Street or French Market entrances for elevator access.

Murals at Press Street Railroad Yards/StudioBe

Many of the murals around the railyards honor the civil rights movement, desegregation and Homer Plessy, who was arrested in 1892 in an act of civil disobedience when he purchased a first-class ticket and sat in a whites-only car. The “These Are Times” mural by [Ayo Scott](#) is viewable on Homer Plessy Way. Prolific mural artist Brandan “B-Mike” Odums’ studio is across the railyard at [StudioBe](#). These murals offer a bold, colorful and poignant homage to the men and women who shaped the civil rights movement in New Orleans. While tours inside StudioBe are temporarily suspended, the stunning murals around the studio’s exterior are worth a stop.

Greetings from Nola Mural

Part of the [Greetings Tour](#), the larger than life postcard-style mural is a fun stop at the corner of Josephine and Magazine Street. Artist couple Victor Ving and Lisa Beggs have been traveling the country in their RV creating colorful murals that feature local landmarks, history and culture along the way. The New Orleans installation partnered with local artist Mystic Blue Signs and La Belle Nouvelle and features iconic New Orleans imagery. If it’s a bright sunny day, visit this mural after noon so the natural light is bright but the sun isn’t in your eyes.

Mardi Gras World

To get into the Mardi Gras spirit any time of the year, visit [Mardi Gras World](#) for a behind the scenes look at the craftsmanship that goes into the annual celebration. The expansive 300,000 square foot warehouse makes it easy to social distance, while getting an inside look into how Mardi Gras floats are designed, fabricated and constructed. Shuttle service is available if you call ahead. *Hours: 7 days a week, from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; first tour starts at 11 a.m. and last tour at 3:30 p.m. Admission: \$15 per adult*

Mother River Statue

If you’re already in the neighborhood checking out the floats at the nearby Mardi Gras World, take a minute to walk down to the Port Authority of New Orleans building for a quiet spot to swing under the Crescent City Connection. The Mother River statue pays homage to the impact the river and all its tributaries have had on New Orleans, and the swings are a great place to rest your feet and watch the river traffic. *1350 Port of New Orleans Place.*

Parking note: obey all posted no-parking signage nearby. This location is tucked away and not easy to walk to but if you've already shuttled to Mardi Gras World next door, the view is worth the stop.

City Park

From the casual, family friendly trails of the Couturie Forest to the boat and bike rentals on Big Lake or the collection at the New Orleans Museum of Art, City Park has something for everyone. Capacity at attractions is limited to 25% occupancy at a time, so get the latest updates on what is open at [City Park's website](#) and New Orleans Museum of Art's website (noma.org). While the park has lots of wide, open spaces and old shady oaks to picnic under, staffing during the pandemic is limited. Be prepared to take your trash with you to alleviate the strain on the volunteers who have helped maintain the park during the pandemic.

Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden

With such an impressive collection of sculptures nestled in oak trees of City Park, the [Besthoff Sculpture Garden](#) warrants its own trip if you have the time to explore. The winding paths span across acres of lush, picturesque landscapes and feature over 90 sculptures. Some paths in the garden are wider than others, so pay attention to directional arrows added to keep patrons from passing too closely. Admission is \$5 for adults or free for New Orleans Museum of Art members. *Garden Hours: Wednesday through Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.*

From the French Quarter to Magazine Street and all around town, New Orleans offers so many quaint shops, beautifully colored homes and lushly landscaped gardens. The curious and friendly southern charm make it a great city to discover your own favorite spots—just remember to be mindful of local restrictions, mask up and explore safely!