

LOEWS

SUMMER/FALL 2011



PHILLY 2.0 | THE GREAT OUTDOORS | DON CESAR'S ETERNAL ALLURE

LOEWS NEW ORLEANS
OFFERS VISITORS A
SLICE OF LIFE IN THE
BIG EASY.

local living

BY CARRIE WILLIAMSON

Stepping into this elegant lobby, the decor of Loews New Orleans is reflective of the colorful Arts District in which the hotel is located—and the genuinely warm welcomes from the staff immediately make you feel at home. Still, what completely wowed this native New Orleanian was the basket of goodies waiting in my room. Zapp’s potato chips? Check. Barq’s root beer? Check. Tee Eva’s praline? Check. Abita beer, Hubig Pie? Check, check. Whoever put this package together knows their stuff. The gift basket is what kicks off Loews New Orleans’ Living Like a Local package, which runs until December 30, connecting guests with the city’s premier eateries and bars. This makes sense, since eating and drinking well are a key part of life in the Big Easy. And while I was excited to get started, it was tricky to pry myself out of my luxuriously spacious guest room, which featured an exquisite skyline view and Duke Ellington playing on the CD.

INITIAL INDULGENCES

Eventually, I did make it downstairs for my welcome cocktail at Swizzle Stick Bar, stop one for the Living Like a Local package. Lu Brow, the “bar chef”—don’t confuse her with a bartender—prepared a tall glass of rum-laced fizzy pinkness called the Adelaide Swizzle, just one of a selection of liquid masterpieces she creates. Lu uses seasonal fruits and fresh juices to concoct both classic and cutting-edge cocktails. Without a doubt, she’s why the Swizzle Stick is a perennial winner of the “Best of New Orleans” ranking in *Gambit*, a local weekly newspaper whose readers annually select top venues.

It’s never easy to tear yourself away

Right: Bourbon Street nightlife
Opposite page: Griddle-Seared Gulf Fish at Commander’s Palace



COURTESY OF RICHARD NOWITZ



“THE DRAW AT CAFÉ
ADELAIDE IS THE
CREATIVE CUISINE OF
CHEF CHRIS LUSK, THE
KING OF LOUISIANA
SEAFOOD.”

from a bar helmed by a cocktail master, but duty called: in this case, duty involved eating at the hotel’s Café Adelaide. (Too bad duty like this doesn’t call more often—I’d probably be a lot more dutiful.) Here, the draw is the creative cuisine of Chef Chris Lusk, proclaimed “King of Louisiana Seafood” after beating out 11 other chefs at the Louisiana Seafood Cook-Off last year. And the year before that, noted restaurant reviewer John Mariani of *Esquire* named him one of the “Four Breakout Chefs.”



COURTESY OF COMMANDER'S PALACE

With a menu in front of me, I was suddenly faced with a tough choice. An inventive Parmesan-cured breast of Muscovy duck or a traditional Turtle Soup au Sherry? Or the Cayenne Five Spice Rubbed Ahi Tuna? After lots of waffling and false starts, the smart, savory choice ended up being Chef Lusk's signature appetizer, the Shrimp and Tasso "Corndogs." The spicy sauce coating the shrimp was balanced out beautifully by the five-pepper jelly and chicory, and flavorful pickled okra on the side rounded out the dish nicely. (Normally this veggie is an acquired taste and honestly, not easy to acquire, but you'll pick it up very quickly after trying it at Café Adelaide.) This was the perfect prelude to a divine entrée, Olive Oil Poached Black Drum. The poaching cooked the fish perfectly, and the soft texture contrasted smartly with the crispy kale. But what really made the dish sing was the Venetian sauce, made with tarragon vinegar, white wine and herbs: it brought out the fish's flavors wonderfully. The Madagascar vanilla bean crème brulee gave a sweet but refreshing end to the meal, thanks to a ginger-citrus jam kissed with a touch of spearmint.

MOTHER KNOWS BEST

On my second day of Living Like a Local with Loews, the agenda opened with food, and believe me, I was not complaining. Things kicked off at a legendary eatery called Mother's, which has been serving up down-home scrumptiousness since 1938. Don't fret, if while waiting in line, your stomach starts to rumble in earnest. The smoke sausage and black ham create an aroma that fills the air with culinary deliciousness. But don't let this fragrant distraction deter you from ordering some "debris," a local delicacy that's basically fall-off-the-bone pieces of roast beef and drippings served with grits, eggs and a biscuit with a cup of Mother's own blend of chicory-flavored coffee. The buttery grits and perfectly cooked eggs play off the savory debris, with the biscuit adding a warm, fluffy touch to a richly satisfying dish. And if you've never had coffee laced with chicory, you might find that Mother's may spark a mild addiction to the chocolatey flavor of this herb. In fact, a surprising amount of visitors end up picking up this local custom when they head back home.



This page:
Mardi Gras Float
and Crowd
Opposite page, top:
Lobby, Loews New Orleans
Opposite page, bottom:
The "Wedding Cake House," a
historic home on St. Charles Avenue

POWER LUNCH

Breakfast provided wonderful fuel for walking around the French Quarter, which is about three blocks from the hotel. Here I mostly focused on window-shopping elaborate pieces of silver at the antique shops along Royal Street and bopping in and out of clothing boutiques on Chartres. That said, there's a lot more to do here than shop. Looming large against the Mississippi River is the world-renowned Audubon Aquarium, where visitors can get eye-to-eye with nearly 600 species of sea creatures. Here you can touch a baby shark in the shark pool, watch seahorses glide gracefully through their new home, or be mesmerized by the steely blue eyes and white skin of endangered white alligators that were found in a Louisiana swamp. Seeing one is considered good luck in Cajun lore! Nearby, the Audubon Insectarium (on Canal Street in the U.S. Customs Building) offers impressive insights into insect life, including what it's like to be shrunk down to bug size and the reasons why insects are the building blocks of life on our planet. And anyone who visits the Big Easy will find entertainment right on the streets. Head over to Jackson Square and St. Louis Cathedral to listen to street musicians and check out the paintings by the local artists.

All the cultural exploration helped me work up an appetite for Commander's Palace, a city icon whose reputation for excellence dates back to when it first opened in the 1820s. This New Orleans staple is located in the Garden District, home to many historic mansions and the Lafayette Cemetery No. 1, which has been featured in many movies and books. Pre- or post-Commander's Palace, you can see the area's historic and celebrity homes, including those of Anne Rice and of the Manning family, the "first family" of football. The Garden district is just a short trolley or taxi ride from Loews New Orleans.

Commander's Palace did more than alleviate my hunger, the restaurant created a New Orleans culinary experience that will not be forgotten. My lunch began with what the restaurant calls "the best-kept secret in town," 25-cent lunch martinis. They sure were news to me. The martinis primed my palate for a spicy crawfish bisque, an amazingly rich with flavor appetizer. I followed that with Creole Cochon de Lait, wonderfully smoky pulled pork and Cajun sausage (called *boudin*) that are encased in a crisp French pastry shell, providing contrasting flavor and texture to a classically balanced dish. If you're a Palace newbie, there's only one dessert you really need to consider: the warm, soulful and satisfying Commander's Creole Bread Pudding Soufflé. Since I've enjoyed this dessert many times before, I went with the



Strawberry Shortcake: just-whipped cream on a sweet, moist cake dripping with strawberry juice. The bread pudding soufflé may be a traditional must-try for visitors, but the shortcake is another superb way to top off a Commander's Palace meal.

At this point, I could feel a food coma coming on, so back at the hotel I had a "New Orleans nap," a local custom to recharge your batteries for evening fun after a three-hour drinking lunch or a day at a festival like JazzFest.

ON THE TOWN

Feeling refreshed later that evening, I wound my way down to Canal and Bourbon Streets to catch a little of the Too Be Continued Brass Band. They've been playing that corner for over ten years, belting out New Orleans favorites while passersby lose themselves in the beat and start dancing. Dodging people in the French Quarter is no easy task. Without ease, but with pure excitement, I made my way down Bourbon Street to Pat O'Briens. As I strolled by Irving Mayfield's Jazz Playhouse, a sophisticated jazz club owned by the tremendously talented trumpeter, I made a mental note to stop by there later. Luckily it was a Wednesday night, which is when the Playhouse hosts its NOJO Jam that features a combo of local musicians and out-of-towners, including Jason Marsalis, Glen David Andrews and Germaine Bazzle, one of the city's premier jazz vocalists.

Rock and roll blared out as I entered Pat O'Brien's, which found its beginnings as a speakeasy during the Prohibition era of the 1930's. Fortunately for me, I did not have to use the

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password "Storm's Brewin" to enter, because I only learned of this following my arrival. I made my way to the left, where the main bar resides. On the right, patrons are welcome to lounge at Pat O'Brien's Piano Bar. Go a little further and you'll find the last of their trifecta, the Patio Bar, that is centered around the landmark Flaming Fountain which combines natural gas, water, and lights to create a magnificent spectacle.

I gave my Belgian friend Patrick a double peck hello. He is the King of the Krewe of Cork, who with his merry band of wine-loving revelers, parades through the French Quarter during Mardi Gras. But we were not here to drink wine. We were here to drink cocktails. Yet while ordering a Hurricane is the fun thing to do, after my day of decadence, I decided to start with a straightforward highball. It wasn't long, though, before I was seduced by the Pat O' vibe and found myself ordering a Mai Tai. It turned out to be the perfect New Orleans ending to the perfect New Orleans day.

SWEET ENDING

After sampling the wares at Pat O'Brien's the night before, I got off to a bit of a late start on my last day at the hotel. But it was all bluebird skies on the way to Café du Monde, famous for its café au lait and beignets, fluffy fried puffs of dough covered in powdered sugar. While visitors always end up here, locals love it too, and they don't mind the lines. The wait always seems worth it when you bite into the powdery goodness of a delectable beignet and savor the café au lait, whose sharp notes of chicory tamed with the steamed milk are a perfect counterpoint to the powdery sweetness of the lightly fried squares. Sitting back in the warm sunshine, I raised my cup and toasted the Loews Hotel New Orleans for the opportunity to live like a local.



Café au Lait and Beignets

COURTESY OF CAFÉ DU MONDE



news & notes

California Cruising

Take America's most scenic Southern California drive, add two luxurious Loews Hotels and come up with a jaw-dropping, multi-destination vacation package that's jam-packed with "California Cool." With Loews' new **Cruising the Coast** package, you can start off surrounded by water on a 15-acre peninsula at **Loews Coronado Bay**, enjoying perfect San Diego weather and outdoor adventure. Next, hop into a convertible—your choice of a Mustang, a Volvo or a Mercedes E350—and cruise 2 hours down the Pacific Coast Highway, aptly named one of the "drives of a lifetime." This 140-mile scenic route offers miles of beaches, wildlife, gardens and opportunities for surfing, sailing and hang gliding. Then, bring it home, ocean-front, at **Loews**

Santa Monica, just walking distance from the Pier and some of the most famous beaches on the California Coast. Or do it in reverse. The trip, that is, not your wheels. Start your California dreaming in Santa Monica and feel the wind in your hair as you pass redwood forests, secluded coves and ocean cliffs en route south to the Loews Coronado Bay in San Diego. The Cruising the Coast package includes accommodations, a convertible and a guided map with hidden treasures and places to visit.

A Study in Contrasts

It's not every day you can tee off on a lush green course surrounded by desert rocks, saguaro cacti and wildlife. That's only part of the allure of the magnificent desert golf experience at **Loews Ventana Canyon** in Tucson. It's the added twist of altitude that literally takes things to the next level. At the hotel's Mountain Course, the third hole's tee is only 107 yards from the greens. The trick is you have to hit the ball over a deep ravine, with a challenging bunker on the left front, another ravine on the left side and large rocks on the right. Further hampering your accuracy could be the amazing views of the Sonoran Desert and Catalina Mountains.

Masterfully crafted by top designer Tom Fazio, both the Mountain and the Canyon championship leverage the to feature lots of lush greenery amidst the canyon rock.

At **Loews Lake Las Vegas**, the contrast comes

from the gorgeous desert lake setting in the Nevada desert just 17 miles east of the Vegas strip. Here, you can play at nearby SouthShore Golf Club, with its Jack Nicklaus-designed course that sweeps upward from the lake's shoreline, with elevation changes ranging from 1,410 to 1,750 feet. Complementing the gorgeous views of the lake and of the wildlife are forgiving fairways and five sets of tees per hole, a big help to new or less experienced golfers. Those with low handicaps will find plenty of challenges here, including 88 strategically placed bunkers and many forced carries over canyons and water. Though you'll probably use every club in your bag when you play SouthShore, you'll truly enjoy every round due to the blend of exquisite views and surprising challenges.

VENTANA CANYON

Mountain Course

6,926 yds, 73 CR, 146 SR

Canyon Course

6,819 yds, 72.7 CR, 141 SR

SOUTHSHORE GOLF CLUB

6,917 yds, 72.6 CR, 135 SR

(continued on page 66)



Value is the new luxury.™ Fortunately we deliver both in

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ATLANTA

DENVER

LAKE LAS VEGAS

MONTRÉAL

NASHVILLE

NEW ORLEANS

NEW YORK

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SANTA MONICA

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(continued from page 63)

Summer of Loews

School's out and every day is a new day of your own invention! That's the inspiration behind Summer of Loews! From that perfectly catchy summer song to the bell signaling the arrival of the ice cream truck to picnics and barbecues, summer is here and Loews is ready.

Guests at every Loews hotel are invited to "Come Invent Your Day." No matter who you are, whether you're a family group, a romantic couple looking for quality time or an entrepreneur on the go, Loews' concierges will serve you as summer specialists by creating customized itineraries based your interests. But the real fun starts right inside each Loews destination. Besides uniquely local offerings, hotels will celebrate the "hot" season with a variety of cool games and prizes; special menus including BBQ, Haute Dogs, Skinny Dips; and more.

Whether in a city or at a resort, all Loews cities are built for summer fun, including Orlando's theme parks, Miami, Santa Monica and St. Petersburg's beaches, New York, Atlanta and Philadelphia's cosmopolitan charms, Lake Las Vegas and Annapolis's water-based escapes, San Diego, Tucson and Denver's outdoor adventures, Montreal and Quebec City's artful options, and New Orleans and Nashville's musicality and world-renowned cuisine. So sample some BBQ, play in the waves, grab a picnic box to go and get ready for the ride of a lifetime: It's the Summer of Loews and it's time to Invent Your Day!

New Perks for Pets

Fido and Fluffy are essential members of the family, so it is only fitting that they have the best care on the road. That's why Loews Hotels has partnered with Banfield Pet Hospital. Banfield is the largest pet veterinary practice in the world, with more than 770 hospitals in neighborhoods across the United States. If your pet is sick while you're staying at a Loews Hotel, they'll get a free examination at the local Banfield hospital, plus 15% off any service your pet receives while you're staying with us. Our knowledgeable concierges can help you find the nearest Banfield hospital or you can also visit Banfield.com. In addition to first-class care, pets that stay at Loews will also receive first-class treatment! The Loews Loves Pets program offers 4-legged guests an array of comforts when they arrive at our hotels including plush bedding with a Microdry® ultimate luxury mat, doggie or kitty bowls, gourmet room service menus and more. At Loews we want to pamper all our guests!

LOEWS HOTELS

You can enjoy Loews' luxurious accommodations and signature service in 16 cities in the United States and Canada.

Annapolis	Loews Annapolis Hotel
Atlanta	Loews Atlanta Hotel
Denver	Loews Denver Hotel
Lake Las Vegas	Loews Lake Las Vegas
Miami	Loews Miami Beach Hotel
Montreal	Loews Hôtel Vogue
Nashville	Loews Vanderbilt Hotel
New Orleans	Loews New Orleans Hotel
New York	Loews Regency Hotel
Orlando	Hard Rock Hotel
	Loews Portofino Bay Hotel
	Loews Royal Pacific
Philadelphia	Loews Philadelphia Hotel
Quebec City	Loews Hôtel Le Concorde
San Diego	Loews Coronado Bay
Santa Monica	Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel
St. Petersburg	Don CeSar Beach Resort, A Loews Hotel
Tucson	Loews Ventana Canyon