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NEW ORLEANS TOURISM INDUSTRY REPORT 2nd Quarter 2008 / 3rd Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina August 29, 2008

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August 2008 New Orleans Tourism Industry Fact Sheet

As the nation commemorates the third anniversary of Hurricane Katrina on August 29th, the New Orleans tourism industry reports extraordinary progress in the past three years. **The tourism industry is the largest employer** in the metropolitan New Orleans area and second largest industry in the state of Louisiana. It includes hotels, restaurants, retail, sporting arenas, music venues, museums, galleries and theaters, destination management companies and tour operators. The tourism economic engine accounts for 35% of the City of New Orleans' annual operating budget, \$210 million paying for jobs, safety, transit, etc.

In 2008, New Orleans has seen record-breaking attendance at special events and festivals. This year began with back-to-back (to back) sporting events: Sugar Bowl, BSC Championship and NBA All-Star Game. Mardi Gras was well attended and the Mardi Gras Marathon broke attendance and participation records. Also breaking records in attendance: French Quarter Festivals, Essence Festival and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival saw the highest attendance numbers since Hurricane Katrina.

According to the University of New Orleans Hospitality Research Center, New Orleans saw 7.1 million visitors in 2007 compared with 3.7 million visitors in 2006. There were

10.1 million visitors to New Orleans in 2004. Total visitor spending is up: 2007 visitors spent \$4.8 billion, versus \$2.9 billion in 2006. In 2004, visitor spending was \$4.9 billion.

Signs of progress are continuing in 2008:

- Airlines are adding new flights to Louis Armstrong International Airport
- The city has one of the freshest hotel products in the country
- The French Quarter is cleaner than it has been in decades and we continue to receive extremely positive testimonials from visitors.
- Major corporations such as Carnival Cruise Lines, Southwest Airlines, Express Jet and others are investing in New Orleans' hospitality industry
- New restaurants are opening
- Monthly festivals are enjoying record-breaking attendance
- Armies of college students and volunteers are traveling to the city to participate in life-changing "voluntourism" projects.

2008 Record Breaking Festivals:

French Quarter Festival, April 11 - 13

Attendance: 435,000 (Highest attendance ever)

New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, April 25-27, May 1 - 4

Attendance: 375,000 - 400,000 (Highest attendance since Katrina)

Vieux-To-Do: Creole Tomato, Seafood and Cajun + Zydeco Festival, June 13 - 15

Attendance: 50,000 (Highest attendance ever)

44th Annual Mardi Gras Marathon, February 24th

Attendance: 6,000 from 50 states and 16 countries (broke all previous records)

Essence Music Festival, July 4 - 6

Attendance: 270,000 (Highest attendance ever)

New Orleans Wine and Food Experience, May 20-24

Attendance: 10,000 (Grand Tasting attendance 20% increase)

Economic impact jumped from \$ 5.4 million in 2007 to \$6.8 million in 2008

Tales of the Cocktail, July 16-20

Attendance: 20,000 (Highest attendance ever, almost double from 2007)

Tourism (Leisure and Hospitality) Employment, US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Before Katrina (August 29, 2005): 85,000

After Katrina (October 2005): 42,200 employed

2006: 57,700 employed

2007: 66,100 employed

July 2008 shows over 70,000 employees

Overall Visitor Statistics

According to a University of New Orleans Research Center:

2007: 7.1 million visitors

2006: 3.7 million visitors

2005: on track to break visitation records before Katrina

2004: 10.1 million visitors (record-breaking)

On a typical pre-Katrina year, New Orleans had approx 8 million visitors.

Restaurants

The Louisiana Restaurant Association (LRA) says the current status of New Orleans restaurants is improving. As of August 26, 2008 the Department of Health and Hospitals released the following data on restaurants open in the New Orleans Metro area:

	Pre-Katrina	August 2008
Orleans Parish	2,116	1,384
Jefferson Parish	1,557	1,398
St. Bernard Parish	219	99

The vast majority of restaurants in the most popular tourist areas such as New Orleans' Downtown, Central Business District, Warehouse/Arts District, Garden District, Uptown, Marigny, Bywater and Mid-City are open, including many new restaurants – meaning most of the eateries in the tourist districts are open. Several new restaurants that have opened since Katrina are enjoying success.

According to Tom Fitzmorris in www.nomenu.com, there are 955 restaurants now open in New Orleans compared to 809 before August 2005.

For information on a specific restaurant, please visit the city's restaurant databases at:

<http://www.neworleansonline.com/neworleans/cuisine/restaurants.php>

<http://www.neworleanscvb.com/listings/index.cfm/catID/11/hit/1/sectionID/1/sectionID/1/subsectionID/531>

Hotels

Currently, there are over 140 metro area hotels and motels in operation with over 31,000 rooms in inventory. In Orleans Parish there are 21,000 rooms in inventory and pre-Katrina there were 25,000 rooms. Also prior to Katrina, in the Greater New Orleans Area, there were 265 hotels with an inventory of 38,338.

The Hyatt Regency New Orleans will re-open in 2009 after an extensive renovation.

On June 4, 2008, the Hilton Hotels Corporation announced plans to redevelop the former Fairmont New Orleans, also known as "The Roosevelt," as part of the Waldorf Astoria Collection. Completion and opening is scheduled for late spring of 2009.

Hotel Directories:

<http://www.neworleansonline.com/book/rooms/lodging.php?lodgingType=1>

<http://www.neworleanscvb.com/listings/index.cfm/catID/9/hit/1/sectionID/1/sectionID/1/subsectionID/530>

Bed and Breakfast Directory

There are currently 64 Bed and Breakfast establishments open in New Orleans.

<http://www.neworleansonline.com/book/rooms/lodging.php?lodgingType=2>

Flights

Air Transportation: Louis Armstrong International Airport, as of August 2008, reports 136 daily flights with 15,991 seats serving 38 cities. Pre-Katrina, there were 162 daily flights with 20,676 seats serving 42 cities. The airport expects to reach Pre-Katrina levels by 2009. There is now free WiFi in the MSY airport for travelers on the 2nd floor.

Reports from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) on the total number of passengers who were processed through security over Jazz Fest placed 4 Jazz Fest days in the top 10 departure days since Hurricane Katrina.

1.	January 8, 2008	BCS Game	19,188
2.	May 5, 2008	Jazz Fest (2nd weekend)	17,937
3.	January 2, 2008	Sugar Bowl	17,292
4.	May 4, 2008	Jazz Fest (2nd weekend)	16,868
5.	February 18, 2008	NBA All-Star Game	16,750
6.	April 28, 2008	Jazz Fest (1st weekend)	16,584
7.	March 20, 2008	Spring Break	16,371
8.	May 6, 2008	Jazz Fest (2nd weekend)	16,284
9.	March 19, 2008	Spring Break	16,100
10.	February 1, 2008	Mardi Gras (Friday Before)	15,973

Airlines operating out of the Louis Armstrong International Airport include: Air Tran, American Airlines, Continental, Delta Air Lines, ExpressJet, Jet Blue, Northwest, Southwest Airlines, United Airlines, U.S. Airways.

New Orleans Lakefront Airport is open 24 hours a day. Full service fuel, line service, flight training and aircraft rescue crews are available. As of July 30, 2007, the control tower at the Lakefront Airport is back in service, following a \$6 million renovation.

Public Transit

According to the Regional Transit Authority (RTA), 28 bus lines are running, providing services to an average of 34,000 riders daily, compared with over 120,000 daily riders before Katrina. Earlier this year, the entire St. Charles Streetcar line came back, traveling

all the way to Claiborne Ave. The entire Riverfront line, Canal Street line to the cemeteries with its Carrollton spur to City Park and the New Orleans Museum of Art are also operational. Fare is \$1.25 each way and riders need exact change.

Taxis

Taxis are available on New Orleans streets and at major hotels. The taxicab bureau reported approximately 1,200 of their cabs back on the streets. Taxi rates are \$2.50 plus \$1.60 per mile (.20 per one-eighth mile) thereafter. There is also an additional charge of \$1.00 per passenger after the first passenger. During peak visitor times (including Mardi Gras and Jazz Fest) taxi rates are \$4 per person or the meter rate, whichever is higher. A fixed rate of \$28 (one to two people) is charged from the airport to most areas of New Orleans. For parties of more than two, the fare is \$12 per person.

Airport Shuttle, Inc., is the official ground transportation for Louis Armstrong International Airport, with service to and from New Orleans' hotels and other designated locations. Fare is \$15.00 each way. Children under 6 travel free. No reservations are required, but are recommended at least 24 hours in advance to ensure a timely departure.

Train

Amtrak is operating in New Orleans. The City of New Orleans is running again to Memphis and Chicago, while the Crescent has resumed its regular route to Atlanta and New York.

The Port of New Orleans

Porthole Cruise Magazine, a Fort Lauderdale-based bi-monthly cruise publication, recently named New Orleans its 2007 recipient of the publication's "Editor-in-Chief Award for Best Comeback Port.

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, passenger embarkations and disembarkations topped 750,000. The Port was poised to break the 1 million-passenger mark with four-home-ported cruise ships and numerous port calls utilizing its facilities. The cruise industry rebound is underway at the Port, with passenger embarkations and disembarkations topped 475,000 in 2007.

In October 2007, the Port opened its \$37 million Erato Street Cruise Terminal and Parking Garage, a state-of-the-art facility featuring a 90,000 square-foot-terminal and 1,000-vehicle parking garage.

Currently, Carnival Cruise Line's Fantasy sails four- and five-day Western Caribbean itineraries from New Orleans. Norwegian Cruise Line's Norwegian Spirit sails seven-day cruises to Western Caribbean destinations during the winter and spring. The Carnival Triumph will re-introduce seven-day cruises from New Orleans and a new cruise itinerary to Key West, Nassau and Freeport, Bahamas.

The Port is positioning itself for future growth with the addition of a new cruise terminal at its Poland Avenue facility. The project is currently in the design and engineering

phase. When completed, the Port will have the ability to host three of the industry's largest cruise ships simultaneously.

Superdome and Arena

The Louisiana Superdome, one of America's most recognizable landmarks, has a spectacular schedule of big-time football this fall. With national television cameras focusing on many events, the Superdome has helped deliver the message that New Orleans is back as one of the nation's greatest sports cities.

The revitalized appeal of one of the most exciting cities in the country, coupled with the ability of the Superdome and the Arena to accommodate the biggest events, has put New Orleans back on the sports map. The recent success of the Allstate Sugar Bowl and BCS Championship Game, the NBA All-Star Game and ArenaBowl XXII provided virtual proof that the city is ready. The home teams responded big-time, too, as the New Orleans Saints charged to the NFL's 2006 Southwest Division title in their first year back and the New Orleans Hornets drove to the NBA's 2007-08 West Division Championship, also in their first year back.

The Superdome and the city are currently bidding for a forthcoming Final Four (2012, 2015 or 2016) and are planning a future bid for a Super Bowl (possibly 2013). The city has hosted nine Super Bowls—six in the Superdome—and four Final Fours. The Superdome was the first stadium to host three major college bowl games at the end of the same season: the 2007 R+L Carriers New Orleans Bowl, the 2008 Allstate Sugar Bowl Football Classic and the 2008 BCS Championship Game.

The newer and brighter Superdome, with numerous exciting features, is the biggest construction project in the history of America stadiums. The total cost of Katrina repairs was \$134 million with most of the money coming from a FEMA budget restricted to state facilities. The complete facelift included a new roof and nearly everything under it. The state took advantage of the down time for repairs to add \$59 million in upgrades throughout the building. Improvements ranged from new scoreboards, video boards, a new sound system to major upgrades to concession stands, box suites and club lounges. Work continues on Phase 2 of the improvements to the Superdome with 192-ft. long windows being added to each of the four spectacular reception rooms.

“Sold Out” is a good sign when it hangs in front of the box office. Concerts at the New Orleans Arena are selling at a better pace than before Hurricane Katrina, with numerous sellouts. The Saints sold out their season ticket packages in 2006; a first in the team's history. The Hornets sold out 20 home games in 2007-08 including their last 13. The VooDoo Arena Football team sold more than 12,000 season tickets in their comeback year, 2006, a new high in the first 21 years of the league. The 2008 BCS Championship Game set a new Superdome attendance record of 79,651.

Shopping

Major urban shopping destinations in the city include:

- The Shops at Canal Place
- The Riverwalk
- Jax Brewery

- Royal Street and other French Quarter antiques
- Miles of eclectic shops on Magazine street
- French Market flea-market is undergoing renovations, but is open
- Boutiques, art galleries and shops are open throughout the city

Cultural Institutions

Audubon Insectarium, The Southern Food and Beverage Museum in the Riverwalk and the American Absinthe Museum in the French Quarter are all new attractions in 2008.

All major museums have re-opened including:

- New Orleans Museum of Art
- Besthoff Sculpture Garden
- The Ogden Museum of Southern Art
- National World War II Museum
- Contemporary Arts Center
- Louisiana Children's Museum
- Audubon's Aquarium of Americas and Zoo
- LA State Museum's Cabildo, Presbytere, Madame John's Legacy, Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses
- Old Ursuline Convent
- Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra
- New Orleans Opera Association

Cultural Calendars

www.NolaFunGuide.com and www.24Nola.com are resources for events and information about tourist attractions and cultural events around New Orleans.

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