



**Grand Opening of Mardi Gras Museum Marks Major Cultural Milestone for Lake Charles, La.**

*New world-class attraction opens Friday, April 17, 2026, during a banner year for Lake Charles cultural tourism*

**LAKE CHARLES, La., April 17, 2026**—[Visit Lake Charles](#) is excited to welcome a vibrant new destination-defining landmark with the grand opening of the [Mardi Gras Museum of Imperial Calcasieu](#) on *Friday, April 17, 2026*. Located in the heart of the Nellie Lutcher Cultural District, the new museum represents a major milestone in the city's resurgence and is a cornerstone of more than \$50 million in new cultural attractions debuting across the destination.

Replacing the beloved original museum lost during Hurricane Laura in 2020, the reimagined Mardi Gras Museum is a larger, modern, immersive space featuring the world's largest display of Mardi Gras costumes and designed to celebrate the pageantry, artistry and traditions of one of the nation's largest Mardi Gras celebrations outside New Orleans, while preserving the stories and craftsmanship that define Southwest Louisiana's Carnival culture.

"This museum is the result of extraordinary collaboration, creativity and determination," said Kyle Edmiston, president and CEO of Visit Lake Charles. "We are deeply grateful to the governmental agencies and community members who brought this vision to life. The new Mardi Gras Museum is a powerful symbol of Lake Charles' resilience and a defining moment in our evolution as a world-class cultural destination."

The Mardi Gras Museum offers a 6,000-square-foot, winding, sensory-rich journey through Lake Charles' Carnival traditions. Guests will encounter elaborate gowns adorned with beadwork, feathers and sequins; a series of vignettes highlighting costume designers and the creative process; and exhibits exploring the history of local parades and more than 60 active krewes. Interactive experiences invite visitors to try on costumes, learn the art of float-building, ride in a simulated parade, and experience Mardi Gras through sound, light and motion. Additional exhibits explore Cajun and Creole culture, King Cake traditions, and the full Mardi Gras season, from Twelfth Night through Fat Tuesday. The museum also features an on-site gift shop, shared boardroom space for krewes, and is available for private event rentals.

Strategically positioned along the I-10 corridor, the museum adds a compelling year-round arts and heritage draw to Lake Charles, complementing the destination's festival calendar, culinary scene, and outdoor adventures along the Creole Nature Trail.

The museum's debut anchors a banner year for the destination. In 2026, Lake Charles celebrates the first full year of [Port Wonder](#), a more than \$30 million lakefront complex featuring a new [Children's Museum of Southwest Louisiana](#), [Louisiana's only Wildlife & Fisheries Nature & Science Center](#), and [Crying Eagle Brewery](#).

The year also marks the 100th anniversary of Louisiana Highways 90 and 190, reinforcing the city's road-trip appeal—with the [Creole Nature Trail](#), a 180-mile All-American Road known as "America's Outback," top of mind for travelers. With destination-dupe positioning—offering local Mardi Gras and Chuckfest, a Jazz Fest-style event, at a more accessible price point than neighboring destinations—plus easy access via a short drive from Houston, Baton Rouge and New Orleans and a convenient regional airport, Lake Charles is firmly positioned as one of the Gulf South's most compelling tradition-rich destinations.

Additionally, Lake Charles' accommodations landscape continues to evolve, with [L'Auberge Casino Resort Lake Charles](#) recently unveiling [renovated guest rooms](#) featuring updated interiors and modern finishes, and [Bayou Glamping](#), now in its first full calendar year after opening in July 2025, accommodating up to 50 guests across two riverside glamping tents, a fully outfitted camper (the Riverside Glamper), rugged tent sites and a lodge for larger groups.

#### **Visitor Information**

The Mardi Gras Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$15 for adults and \$12 for seniors and military personnel and \$8 for children. Discounted group rates are available. Visit [mardigrasmuseum.org](http://mardigrasmuseum.org).

#### **About Visit Lake Charles**

Visit Lake Charles, the official destination marketing organization for Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana, is the only organization in Southwest Louisiana providing advocacy, promotion, and education for the tourism industry. For more information on Visit Lake Charles and things to see and do in Louisiana's Playground, log on to [www.visitlakecharles.org](http://www.visitlakecharles.org).

#### **Assets:**

- [Fact Sheet](#)
- Mardi Gras Museum: [Images](#) (credit Visit Lake Charles)
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