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## NEW ORLEANS RESTAURANTS

### *Famous Cuisine Tempts Visitors and Locals Alike*

**New Orleans, LA** — New Orleans restaurants have achieved far-reaching fame and renown thanks to the city's rich history of culinary traditions and its devotion to high standards in food service. In a country where restaurant chains create a uniform and uninspiring dining landscape, New Orleans remains an outpost where every delicious meal is a one-of-a-kind dining experience.

At the heart of the New Orleans restaurant scene is a local cuisine unlike any other. Its storied history is a complex one that dates back to the city's early years in the 1700's. The cuisine includes influences from French, Spanish, African, Italian, and Native American cultures, as well as many others. The term *Creole* refers to the cuisine that developed when New Orleanians emulated European cooking styles while using local ingredients. Coming to New Orleans by way of rural Louisiana, *Cajun* food also has European influences but is considered more rustic.

Traditional Creole and Cajun restaurants still thrive in the city. In addition, countless local chefs use the city's traditional recipes as a launching pad for their own inventive creations. Furthermore, cosmopolitan cuisine from all over the world is well represented in the dining scene. One common thread that unites the city's restaurants is excellence. Simply put, a mediocre establishment won't survive long in New Orleans; diners have too many better options.

The oldest restaurant in New Orleans is Antoine's, an elegant Creole institution established in 1840. The next oldest is Tujague's, which started in 1856 as lunch and dinner spot for merchants and laborers. Even today, whether one chooses a formal or casual dining experience—from trout *meunière* to catfish po' boys, from Oysters Rockefeller to raw oysters on the half shell, from bread pudding to beignets—New Orleans food always satisfies.

Several celebrity chefs have launched their careers in New Orleans restaurants including Emeril Lagasse, who originally hails from Massachusetts. Other renowned chefs whose careers are intertwined with New Orleans restaurants are Paul Prudhomme, Leah Chase, John Besh, Susan Spicer, Donald Link, Frank Brigtsen, Tenney Flynn, René Bajeux, and Greg Sonnier.

Eating out in New Orleans is also a large part of the local economy. According to the Louisiana Restaurant Association, the greater New Orleans area contains 3,400 eating and drinking establishments generating approximately \$1.6 billion in annual sales. The New Orleans restaurant industry directly or indirectly employs 10% of the region's workforce.

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