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## Vermilion Parish Suggested Tourism Stops\*

**Bienvenue! Vermilion Parish is easily accessible from Lafayette via Hwy. 167, Lake Charles and New Iberia via Hwy. 14, Jennings via Hwy. 26 and Crowley via Hwy. 13. Which ever way you enter our parish, these suggested itineraries will allow you to experience "the most Cajun place on earth". Enjoy your stay and please come back again and again.**

### **Gueydan: "The Duck Capital of America"**

Located in downtown Gueydan, is the **Gueydan Museum**. Located in the old Gueydan Bank building, c. 1902, the museum houses a permanent collection of rare photographs and artifacts from Gueydan's early days, as well as, changing art exhibits from local artists. *Open Wednesday thru Friday 1 to 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Allow 30 minutes to 1 hour for tour. 337-536-0443. 212 Main St., Gueydan, LA 70542*

For the nature enthusiasts, Gueydan and the southern areas of Vermilion Parish are known for its birding. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) provides a two-mile birding and nature trail at **White Lake Wetlands Conservation Area (WLWCA)** located 7.4 miles south of Gueydan at the end of Hwy. 91. in Vermilion Parish. The trail is open daily from sunrise to sunset and there is no fee or permit required for visitors. Visitor parking is located at the entrance to White Lake WCA, The trail area includes a covered pavilion with tables, two kiosks with information on the trail and the species of plants and animals in and around the WCA, and an observation tower located at the southeast corner of the trail. *Call 337-536-9400 or visit <http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/white-lake-wca-birding-and-nature-trail>*

### **Kaplan: "Gateway to Acadiana's Coastal Wetlands"**

Once you've finished in Gueydan, travel east on Hwy. 14 to Kaplan. Make sure you visit **Le Musée de Kaplan** located on Cushing Blvd. The museum features displays on the history and culture of Kaplan and its people as well as rotating art exhibits. A free self-guided or personal tour is offered. Enjoy good coffee and music at "Coffee and Music" held on certain Saturdays of the month. Call for a schedule of musicians and dates. *Open Wednesday thru Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 337-643-1528. Allow 30 minutes to 1 hour for tour. 405 N. Cushing Blvd., Kaplan, LA 70548*

For a unique experience that you'll be talking about for years to come, visit **Crawfish Haven/Mrs. Rose's Bed and Breakfast**. Guests can experience first-hand how crawfish appear on Cajun tables during the months of November to May. A ride on a crawfish boat allows you to catch and boil your own crawfish with the help of a guide. The 3 bed/2 bath bed & breakfast sleeps 6 people. *Call 337-652-8870 for rates and times or visit [www.crawfishhaven.net](http://www.crawfishhaven.net). 6807 Hwy. 35, Kaplan, LA 70548*

If you've worked up an appetite, then head south on Hwy. 35 to **Suire's Grocery and Restaurant**. A local favorite, Suire's serves home cooked Cajun meals in a casual, family setting. Make sure to try their famous turtle sauce piquant or made from scratch desserts. They also have many menu items packaged for you to take with you. *Open Monday thru Saturday. 337-643-8911. 13923 Hwy. 35, Kaplan, LA 70548*

### **Abbeville: "Someplace Special on the Bayou"**

Centrally located at the intersection of Hwys. 167 and 14, Abbeville is the parish seat of Vermilion Parish. Downtown Abbeville is home to many locally-owned seafood restaurants. If you're in the mood for salty, topless oysters, fried seafood or an overstuffed po-boy, then you've come to the right place. Most restaurants are open for lunch and dinner, so feel free to drop in for supper if you are still full from Suire's Grocery. To work off your meal, take a stroll of **Historic Downtown**. Visit St. Mary Magdalen Church and cemetery, Magdalen Square and other historic buildings in downtown. After you have toured our downtown, browse through some of the retail shops in the downtown area that sell items ranging from small collectibles and antique furnishings to home decor and gifts. Several shops sell locally made products, cookbooks and souvenirs so you can take home a little bit of Vermilion Parish.

After you tour the downtown area, visit **The Depot at Magdalen Place** for souvenirs and to view the railroad museum. The Depot is an 1894 wood frame railroad freight depot the houses a railroad museum, gift shop, tourist information and Cajun products. *Free. Open Tuesday thru Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 337-740-2112. 201 W. Lafayette St., Abbeville, LA 70510*

Located across from Magdalen Square and The Depot is the **Abbeville Cultural & Historical Museum & Art Gallery and Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission**. The Museum features rotating exhibits from local artists, as well as exhibits from the Omelette Festival, the Vermilion Historical Society and more, as well as tourist information on the parish and the state of Louisiana. *Free. Open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m to 4:30 p.m. 337-898-4114. 200 N. Magdalen Sq., Abbeville, LA 70510*

Abbeville's newest attraction is the **Sam Guarino Blacksmith Shop Museum and Annex**. The blacksmith shop, c. 1912, was owned by Italian immigrant Sam Guarino and was still in operation until December 31, 2003 when it officially closed its doors. The Guarino family donated the building and all equipment to the City of Abbeville who has spent the last few years converting it into a blacksmith museum. Every part of the museum, including the dirt floor, was moved a few blocks from its original location to the new location on State Street. The annex features a short film on the Sam Guarino family and more artifacts on blacksmithing, the Guarino family and Sicily. *Free. Open by appointment only. 337-898-4110. 304 S. State St., Abbeville, LA 70510.*

Visitors can tour the **Wells Fargo Building** and view a piece of Abbeville's history. Listed on the National Historic Register and currently a private residence, visitors can take a guided tour of the home, view the beautiful artwork, listen to the antique music boxes and learn about the history of the building. *Tours are \$15 per person and requires a minimum 30 minute notice. Tickets are available at the Tourist Commission office. Allow 1 hour and 30 minutes. 118 Main St., Abbeville, LA 70510*

Located at the Chris Crusta Airport on Hwy. 14 is the **Louisiana Military Hall of Fame & Museum**. The museum features military exhibits, oral histories, Hall of Fame Inductees and displays of historical memorabilia from heroic Louisiana veterans. *Free. Call 337-898-9645 to schedule a visit. 911 Revis Sirmon Loop, Abbeville, LA 70510*

Abbeville is home to two live entertainment venues, both housed in historic buildings. **Le Bayou Legendaire**, located in the old Richard Sale Barn, features live musical performances in a listening, smoke-free atmosphere where the audience can interact with the performers. *Call 337-893-5760 or visit [www.lebayou.org](http://www.lebayou.org) for a performance schedule. 1307 S. Henry., Abbeville, LA 70510.* The **Abbey Players Theatre** is a non-profit community theater in downtown Abbeville that holds performances throughout the year. *Call 337-893-2442 or visit [www.abbeyplayers.com](http://www.abbeyplayers.com) for their upcoming production. 206 S. State St., Abbeville, LA 70510*

If you are ready to call it a day, Abbeville has several **lodging options**. From hotels and bed and breakfast inns to RV parks, there are accommodations for every type of traveler. For a list of accommodations, contact the *Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission, 200 N Magdalen Square, Abbeville, LA 70510, 337-898-6600, www.MostCajun.com.*

### **Maurice: "Gateway to Vermilion Parish"**

For those visitors heading to Lafayette, take time to stop at **Touchet's** on Hwy. 167. Touchet's is home to the French Jam Sessions held every other Saturday. Sit back and enjoy the music performed by beginners to accomplished musicians or take a spin on the dance floor, it's up to you. *Call 337-893-9882 for a schedule of jam sessions. 7460 Hwy. 167, Maurice, LA 70555*

Right before you arrive in Maurice, take a right at the caution light to visit **Vivian Alexander Gallery & Museum**. Vivian Alexander might be one of Vermilion Parish's best-kept secrets. Tour the gallery, located on the Vermilion River, and view the fabulous egg purses and other elegant objects d'art on display, all of which is for sale. Also on display are the Ocean's 12 piece commissioned by Warner Bros. and the Smirnoff egg commissioned by Smirnoff Vodka. *Free tours are available, but call 337-898-0803 first to schedule a tour. Allow 30 minutes for the tour. 6165 Picard Ln., Maurice, LA 70555*

For a glimpse into Maurice's history, visit the **Maurice Villien Museum** located behind St. Alphonse Catholic Church. Housed in the Maurice Villien Mercantile Store, this museum features artifacts and history on this little town in northern Vermilion Parish. The museum also hosts a French Table on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month from 10-11am. *Open by appointment. Call 337-652-0166 for information. 218 Chief H Fred Ave., Maurice, LA 70555*

A stop in Maurice would not be complete without a visit to **Hebert's Specialty Meats**. Home of the stuffed deboned chickens, Hebert's also carries fresh sausage, seafood pies, boudin and other Cajun items. Hebert's doesn't ship items, so bring an ice chest to take a bit of Cajun cooking home with you! *Open Monday thru Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Sunday from 7:30 a.m. to noon. 337-893-5062. 8212 Maurice Ave., Maurice, LA 70555*

For a bite to eat before going into Lafayette, **The Villager** is a great stop for po-boys and **Village Deaux** has fresh brewed coffee and many varieties of donuts for your sweet tooth. **Village Station** and **The Eatery** has Cajun favorites such as fried seafood, etouffee, gumbo and more. If you're not hungry, but just looking for a cold drink, stop in at **City Bar, "World Famous Saloon"**. Established in 1927, City Bar is a favorite among the locals.

### **Erath: "Home of the Erath 4th of July Festival"**

Located ten minutes east of Abbeville on Hwy. 14, is the Town of Erath. Once home to a thriving sugar mill, this quiet community is proud of its French culture. Many residents still speak Cajun French and you can see it written on many of the street signs around town. On every other Saturday, enjoy live French and Cajun music at the **Museum Café** from 2 to 6 p.m. *Call 337-937-0012 for a schedule. 102 E. Edwards St., Erath, LA 70533*

To learn about our Cajun way of life, visit the **Acadian Museum of Erath**. This museum has numerous displays and artifacts on the life and culture of the Acadian people who settled in this area from Nova Scotia. *Admission is free. Hours vary, so call ahead, 337-937-5468. Allow 30 minutes to 1 hour tour. 203 S. Broadway St., Erath, LA 70533*

Before continuing on your journey through the parish, grab a bite to eat **MooNoo's**, home of the "Best Hamburger in Vermilion Parish," or dig in to a pile of boiled seafood at **Big John's** or **T-Bob's**.

South of Erath on Hwy. 330 is **Don's Boat Landing**. Located on the Boston Bayou, Don's features a boat launch, grocery store, fishing tournaments and entertainment on some weekends. *5515 W. Hwy. 688, Erath, LA 70533*

Continue along Hwy. 330 and turn left onto Hwy. 690 to visit the **Bancker Grotto Memorial Park**. Bancker was once a thriving community nestled between four large plantations that comprised the main land holdings of the area. In fact, the entrance to Cade Plantation is located where Hwy 330 turns left in front of the Bancker Grotto and is still slightly visible. The grotto was built on the site where a Catholic Church once stood. To see that church today, you would have to travel to its present location in nearby Henry, where the population of Bancker shifted. The original grotto's statue of Mary now adorns the front of the Catholic Church in Erath. The Grotto, a replica of the Grotto of Lourdes, pays homage to Mary in reference to the children who claimed to have seen her vision after World War II. The Catholic Church has played a generous role in shaping our culture. Both the church cemetery that dates to 1897 and the Grotto is open to the public. Sit under the oaks for a picnic or simply meditate in the quiet on the banks of the Vermilion River. The beautiful surroundings are a haven for birdwatchers and nature lovers. *18314 Live Oak Rd., Erath, LA 70533*

### **Delcambre: "Home of the Delcambre Shrimp Festival"**

Five minutes to the east of Erath and the first town you will come to if entering Vermilion Parish from New Iberia is the small community of Delcambre. Home to the annual Delcambre Shrimp Festival, Delcambre is known for its shrimping industry. Local fishermen harvest an abundance of seafood near Delcambre, much of which is served in Vermilion Parish restaurants. The Twin Parish Port Commission, along with the LSU Ag Center and the Louisiana Sea Grant, have created a marketplace where consumers are able to contact fishermen directly to purchase shrimp and other seafood fresh from the dock. Boats dock at the **Delcambre Direct Seafood Docks** and the **Bayou Carlin Cove Boat Landing** to sell their catch directly to the public. Quality, wild-caught fresh or frozen Louisiana seafood is available on a seasonal basis. The availability of fresh seafood makes the **Delcambre Seafood and Farmers Market** one of the most unique farmers market in the country and features food, music, Cajun food and handmade arts and crafts.

### **Intracoastal City**

On your way to the southern end of Vermilion Parish, visit Louisiana's newest state park, **Palmetto Island State Park**. Located on the Vermilion River, this state park offers a real south Louisiana outdoors experience. Overnight guests can stay in one of six vacation cabins that are nestled among the trees and foliage. For the RV campers, there are 96 campsites to choose from. 20 sites include an extra tent camping pad. The visitor center complex features a water playground and bathhouse for the overnight and day visitors. A multi-purpose room can be rented for meetings, gatherings and many other events. A boat launch provides access to the river for fishing and boating, while the interior lagoons allow canoers and kayakers an up-close look at the native plant and animal life. *Open year-round. Admission is \$3 per person for day use only. For reservations, call 877-226-7652 or www.reserveamerica.com. Main office: 337-893-3930, 19501 Pleasant Rd., Abbeville, LA 70510*

Located in Intracoastal City, the **Leland Bowman Lock** is a great place to watch boats, picnic, do some bird watching or learn about the Intracoastal Canal, a partially manmade canal inland of the Gulf of Mexico, stretching from Texas to Florida, that allows water transportation. It was furthered along after World War II when German subs managed to sink 90 crude carrying boats from Texas to New Orleans in the Gulf of Mexico. This and other history, plus an interesting video can be found at the Lock's main office. The Lock is open during the day and is free to tour. *Please call ahead to be allowed into the gates, 337-893-6790. Allow 30 minutes to tour. 16117 LA Hwy. 333, Abbeville, LA 70510*

### **Pecan Island**

To view the wildlife that inhabits Vermilion Parish, **travel down Hwy. 82 to Pecan Island**. As you travel, enjoy the drive on the scenic highway through marshland inhabited by alligator, deer, nutria and native birds and other waterfowl. This entire area is known for hunting and fishing, so don't hesitate to stop at the roadside turnarounds for a little fishing, crabbing or just to inhale and exhilarate at the beauty of the open marsh and its elusive inhabitants. You will need a Louisiana fishing license to crab, so stop in at Stelly's Grocery on Hwy. 82 before you arrive in Pecan Island. Here, you can also purchase supplies and food for your fishing or crabbing trip.

While you're in the area, visit **Freshwater City**, the home to oil industry docks, the Freshwater Bayou Lock and the Gulf of Mexico. Hwy. 82 will take you into Cameron Parish, then eventually into Texas near Port Arthur.

**\*This is only a small list of things to in Vermilion Parish. For more information on other fun things to see and do, please call 337-898-6600 or visit www.MostCajun.com.**