

The Krewe of Lafcadio

The Krewe of Lafcadio parades in the French Quarter celebrating and satirizing New Orleans culture. Our icon is the journalist and writer [Lafcadio Hearn](#) (1850-1904) who published extensively about [New Orleans culture](#), including [an early Creole cookbook about its culinary arts](#) as well as [political cartoons about its corruption](#). Just months after moving to New Orleans, Lafcadio famously wrote in a letter to a friend back in Ohio:

Times are not good here. The city is crumbling into ashes. It has been buried under a lava flood of taxes and frauds and maladministrations so that it has become only a study for archaeologists. Its condition is so bad that when I write about it, as I intend to do soon, nobody will believe I am telling the truth. But it is better to live here in sackcloth and ashes than to own the whole state of Ohio. - Lafcadio Hearn, circa 1877

Date: The Saturday of Mardi Gras weekend. In 2013, this falls on February 9th.

Time: **Pre-Parade Party:** 11:30am -1:30 PM, the Atrium at Galvez Restaurant, 914 N. Peters St., on the Riverfront with passed tapas, soft drinks, tea/coffee and a cash bar (happy hour prices).

Second Line: 1:30pm – 2pm, proceed from Galvez Restaurant to Jackson Square

Parade: 2pm – 4pm

Theme: A celebration of New Orleans culture and in particular, the culinary arts of New Orleans.

Parade format: The krewe presents a walking parade that harkens back to the original Mardi Gras parades. A mule-drawn float carries a top local chef as royalty. Floats are followed by costumed marchers and brass bands. We had 75 members last year and hope to have 100 this year.

Royalty: A top New Orleans chef featured on a mule-drawn float. Our 2012 royalty were Chef Susan Spicer and Chef John Besh. Mardi Gras is traditionally the pagan feast prior to the Christian Lenten Fast. The pagan part is already well covered by others. We choose to focus on a culinary celebration.

Bands: Last year we marched with the Free Agents Brass Band, the Paulin Brothers brass band, and the Refried Confuzion Blowhard Brass Band. At the conclusion of the parade, if you enjoyed the performance of your band, it is customary to contribute toward a tip. \$5 to \$10 per person is good.

Costumes: Costumes are required. Marchers will supply their own costumes. Costumes can be most anything so long as in good taste. The costume can be simple (you can buy a chef's jacket and toque inexpensively at Caire Hotel & Restaurant Supply, or online at [buycostumes.com](#)) but accessorize it with a clever twist. Just a clever name tag can do a lot. We seek opportunities for group costumes, like our Hostess Cupcake Brigade, or sous-chef brigade. If you need inspiration, try to think of a costume that is celebratory of local culture, in particular our culinary culture, or one that is satirical of some dysfunctional aspect of our local culture. Please keep your themes local whether they be celebratory or satirical. The best satire is often both local and cultural which are also the hardest hitting and the most exciting to the crowd. Since a Mardi Gras parade is intended to be entertaining, political satire should be either bi-partisan or non-partisan (ridiculing some dysfunctional aspect of our culture). Political satire that attacks an as-yet-unindicted

politician is too easily perceived as being partisan and therefore not in the Mardi Gras spirit of entertaining the Krewe and crowd. It is certainly in the spirit of Lafcadio to satirize a specific tax or fraud or maladministration.

Throws: The signature Krewe of Lafcadio throw is 14” wooden cooking spoons adorned with bows of colored ribbons imprinted “Krewe of Lafcadio”. The mandatory throws package is \$30 per marcher for 20 wooden spoons with ribbons. This works out to ~1 spoon per block of the parade route per member. Marchers may purchase additional throws for themselves through other outlets. Try to reinforce our culinary and cultural themes. As a marching parade you really want to put much more effort into your costume rather than expense into your throws. You may want to carry a few dozen “fancy” Mardi Gras beads along with your spoons but it is not necessary to spend much on throws and you certainly won’t want to carry too much.

Membership: Members must be at least 21 years of age. We seek individuals and couples who wish to celebrate the culture of New Orleans, in particular its culinary arts. For our krewe, Lafcadio Hearn is iconic for celebrating both our city’s cultural gifts, especially its cuisine, as well as satirizing its dysfunctional aspects, in particular: its taxes, frauds and maladministrations. Members should also desire to support our charitable cause (below).

Floats: The parade uses the traditional mule-drawn mini floats. Our membership designs and decorates the floats. The creative experience is a very rewarding part of the carnival experience. It is a fun krewe experience if at least one member of each in-town couple helps work on our floats at least one Saturday afternoon prior to the parade. You don’t have to actually do much. If all you do is share your beer and munchies and help paint something when asked, that is fine. Float work generally starts the first Saturday after New Years’ day weekend. This year, float work is scheduled for three Saturdays, January 12, 19, & 26, from 10am until 5pm. We shouldn’t need Superbowl weekend, but have it just in case. The first Saturday we will make our major design decisions and try to get any primary structure done. We will be doing plenty of artistry the 19th and try to finish everything the 26th. This year we will have just the title float and the one royalty float. The three floats we used last year were leased. We now own two floats. If we get enough new members, we may begin construction on a new mini-float. Does anyone have any design ideas? Should it be a larger than life food item or culinary implement? After the parade, we will need some members to help prepare the floats and their decorations for transportation and storage on Saturday, February 16th.

Warehouse: This year we are renting space at Art Egg Studios, 1001 South Broad Street. Our floats will be under covered parking in their back loading dock/parking lot, off Euphrosine Street, directly across the street from Comeaux Furniture & Appliances (the old Wembley Tie Company). There is some limited space in the back lot which we can use for parking our cars. Please give precedence for those spots to the members who will be making runs for supplies. There is plenty of parking in the immediate vicinity, including in front of the building where it faces the Broad Street overpass. If you are not familiar with this hidden corner of New Orleans, the trick is to approach as you would to go to the Times Picayune.

Dues: Dues are \$165 per marcher which includes attending the pre-parade lunch buffet as well as marching in the parade. The mandatory standard throw package is an additional \$30, bringing the

fees to a total of \$195 per marcher. Everyone is responsible for their own costume and any additional throws. Please make out your check to: *Krewe of Lafcadio*. If you have made a reservation to march this year, please send your check in. If you will not be able to march or need fewer spots, that is ok, please just let me know. If you need additional spots, please contact me, preferably by email. We still have room for additional new members. Mail your checks to:

Krewe of Lafcadio
601 Poydras St., #2220
New Orleans, LA 70130

Attending the lunch and not parading is half price, \$82.50 per person.

Charitable Proceeds: We intend to have a surplus to be donated in support of the New Orleans Navy League program that sends top local chefs to cook New Orleans-style meals for the sailors on our namesake ships (the USS New Orleans and the USS Louisiana). Other potential beneficiaries could be other deployed military units affiliated with the State of Louisiana.

Parade Route: (preliminary)

- The marchers will second line (with the bands) from the Pre-Parade Party (at Galvez Restaurant) to the start area (Chartres & St. Ann) where the mule-drawn floats will meet up.
- The parade will start by proceeding downriver on Chartres Street from St. Ann to Ursuline. Crossover on Ursuline from Chartres to Royal.
- Proceed upriver on Royal to Bienville. Crossover on Bienville from Royal to Bourbon.
- Proceed downriver on Bourbon to St. Ann. Proceed on St. Ann to Chartres where the parade will disband.

Carriage-riders: While this is intended to be a marching parade, we do wish to accommodate those who for different reasons are not able to walk the length of the parade. We expect to hire a carriage for a per rider surcharge of \$100 plus tip (\$20 per rider is appropriate).

Parking: Standard Parking operates the parking lot between the French Quarter and the river (entrance on St. Peter Street adjacent to the Jax Brewery). Galvez restaurant sells parking coupons for \$5 which are good for 2 hours at this lot. If you just need 6 hours of parking for the pre-parade party and the parade, this would likely be your best option. We are not able to reserve any spots so you will have to arrive early before the lot becomes full, probably much earlier than last year.

Safety: If a member of the crowd becomes a problem, please point them out to our police escort. You should not have to engage them yourself. Most importantly, do not go near the mules without explicit permission from the mule handler. Mules are by nature calmer than horses, but they can still spook. Do not march adjacent to a mule nor immediately in front of the mule nor the float. It is the mule handlers' responsibility to keep their mules calm and well behind the preceding parade element. Please help make their job easier for them.

Media coverage: NOLA.com had a great article on our 2012 parade [Thursday before the parade](#) with photos of Chefs Spicer and Besh. The parade itself was on the [cover of the TP Metro section](#) with a picture and two more inside. NOLA.com had a series of [photos taken at the start of the parade](#).

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