

Louisiana Saturday Night

Plan to visit this Acadian town on a special evening each month, when galleries with art, music, refreshments, and loads of fun open their doors and welcome visitors.

Lafayette, Louisiana, really knows how to throw a good party. From 5 to 8 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month, sidewalks along Jefferson Street fill with browsers and buyers taking advantage of the best block party in the region. Galleries throw open their doors, music fills the air, and visitors and locals alike take in the joys of ArtWalk.

Without a Care

One of my favorite spots in the whole shebang (which includes about 20 galleries and shops) is Sans Souci Fine Crafts Gallery. The name means "carefree" in French, though most of the pieces featured here obviously were created with a great deal of care. All artists are juried members of the Louisiana Crafts Guild. Items in this former post office include silk scarves (\$20), fish made from bottle caps (\$44), glass-beaded earrings and a necklace (\$38), raku horsehair pottery (\$30), and more.

From Fine Art to Fun Art

One of the largest venues that attracts shoppers is Jefferson Street Market (a one-time McCrory's), where 70 different artists and vendors fill the large indoor space that also includes a 2,000-square-foot fine arts gallery, Galerie Lafayette. In addition to fine art and high-end antiques, I found everything from LSU paraphernalia to a \$2 fleur-de-lis architectural fragment. A photo of jazz great Dave Brubeck sold for \$100, and live music entertained patrons as they browsed.

On the kitschy scale, nothing beats Studio One 2 One. A hair salon that also showcases works by local artists, this funky space features paintings, photography, and unique jewelry.

Other Top Stops

I also loved checking out Whoojoo Glass Studio, where Craig McCullen crafts terrific stained glass. And Antlers offers great modern acrylic paintings, while Galerie Eclairouse features regional fine art.

Make time to walk downtown, checking out



Gallery hoppers enjoy wandering downtown Lafayette during the monthly gallery strolls, where they can find cutting-edge artwork and a Louisiana-lively time. Musicians with accordions entertain shoppers, providing delightful accompaniment for browsing.



the various spots offering food and beverages, while you drink in the outdoor artwork, such as one of Robert Dafford's murals. *Ex-Garage* (556 Jefferson Street) climbs 125 feet up the side of a building. While you're there, I highly recommend you venture over to The Original Don's Seafood Restaurant. You'll be drawn in by the aroma of gumbo as well as the need to absorb all the great sights and sounds of Lafayette's downtown soiree.

—WANDA MCKINNEY

Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission: 1400 NW. Evangeline Thruway, Lafayette, LA 70501; 1-800-346-1958 or www.lafayettetravel.com. **Second Saturday ArtWalk:** Every second Saturday of the month, year-round. **Hours:** 5-8 p.m. ♦



Where To Go

- Antlers: 555 Jefferson Street; (337) 234-8877
- Galerie Eclairouse: 535½ Jefferson Street; (337) 234-5492
- Jefferson Street Market: 538 Jefferson Street; (337) 233-2589
- Sans Souci Fine Crafts Gallery: 219 East Vermilion Street; (337) 266-7999
- Studio One 2 One: 520 Jefferson Street; (337) 264-1444
- The Original Don's Seafood Restaurant: 301 East Vermilion Street; (337) 235-3551
- Whoojoo Glass Studio: 532 Jefferson Street; (337) 269-9310

