



January - February 2019

January 2019

January 1, 2019, Polar Bear Dip, Perdido Key, FL, www.florabama.com

If you are looking for a new idea to go along with the Southern tradition of eating black-eyed peas on New Year's Day, how about the Polar Bear Dip? Held at the popular Flora-Bama Lounge on the Florida-Alabama state line, this annual Gulf of Mexico splash is perfect when followed up with good music and beverages. Come for laughs, stay for fun.

January 6 - March 5, 2019, Mardi Gras Southwest Louisiana, Lake Charles, LA, <https://www.visitlakecharles.org/swlamardigras/>

Find something to celebrate in Southwest Louisiana, home of the second largest Mardi Gras in the state with over 60 krewes. Enjoy the January 6th kick-off with the 12th Night Celebration where the royal courts from 2018 usher in the new year with unique and extraordinary costumes. Following 12th Night, Laissez les bons temps rouler with a calendar bursting with festivities all the way through Fat Tuesday on March 5th. Look for parades, cook-offs, balls, galas and more. And, by all means, don't miss new King Cake flavors from local bakeries.

January 11-12, 2019, Louisiana Fur and Wildlife Festival, Cameron, LA, www.visitlakecharles.org

The 61st annual Louisiana Fur and Wildlife Festival highlights the local, natural resource industries in the area with this year's event honoring the cattle industry specifically. All ages are welcome and can expect parades, a Gumbo Cook-Off, pageants, a 5K and 1 Mile Run/Walk, dances, Cajun music, exhibits and a carnival with amusement rides. Extra fun is in store for those entering the duck and goose calling contests as well as trap setting, nutria and muskrat skinning, oyster shucking and skeet shooting. Held on the fairgrounds in downtown Cameron, Southwest Louisiana's "oldest and coldest" festival is sure to please.

January 18-21, 2019, Martin Luther King Jr. Festival, Lake Charles, LA, www.visitlakecharles.org

Celebrating 35 years, the festival honors the courage and sacrifices of Martin Luther King Jr. Sponsored by the MLK Coalition, The Vibe 105 Foundation and KZWA 104.9 FM, the festival helps create scholarships for local students to offset the cost of attending college. Additionally, it pays homage to local leaders who exude King's ideas of "Peace, Justice and Brotherhood." Come and enjoy a Memorial Breakfast, MLK Community 5K Run/3 Mile Walk and an MLK Health and Awareness Fair. Family Day Festival is on Monday and includes a parade, music, a Celebrity Gumbo Cook-Off, local vendors, exhibits, arts and crafts and more! This year will incorporate new performances at the breakfast and new musical performances at the Family Day Festival.

January 19-20, 2019, Brooksville Raid Reenactment, Brooksville, FL,
<http://www.brooksvilleraidreenactment.com/>

The 39th annual Brooksville Raid Reenactment is a re-creation of a Civil War battle that actually took place in July of 1864. The event enlists the help of some 1500 reenactors, including several Calvary, 20+ canons and 40 sutlers, and it is considered the largest Civil War reenactment in the state. Visitors may tour the authentic confederate and union camps to get a glimpse of the life and times they lived in. They can also shop from the sutlers selling period items as well as old-fashioned favorites like kettle corn, root beer and fry bread. The event is dog-friendly and open to the public. The Friday before the event is "School Day," giving local students the chance to learn about 19th century history. Each year new and different battle scenarios are carried out, so even if you have been before, there's good reason to come back.

January 23-28, 2019, Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival, Titusville, FL, <https://scbwf.org/>
Brevard Nature Alliance has a mission to build public awareness and appreciation of the county's natural resources by promoting nature-based ecotourism. Part of that commitment is hosting the annual Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival attracting nature-loving tourists from across the world. The area offers amazing opportunities to experience migratory populations through unique ecotourism experiences. Grant-based funding will allow for more interactive field trips, workshops and other programs to go along with the speakers, current workshops and seminars discussing birding, conservation, digiscoping and photography. Additionally, healthy outdoor activities are planned such as early bird yoga, mindful birding and meditation in nature.

January 26, 2019, 18th Annual African American Cultural Celebration, Raleigh, NC,
<https://www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/events/festivals>

Black History Month officially kicks off with the North Carolina Museum of History's annual African American Cultural Celebration (AACC) featuring family fun, activities, performances and presentations that showcase examples of music, drama, history, literature, film, art, food, education and scholarship, and service. This year the theme is "Culture, Kindship and Community: The Ties that Bind" and family concepts will be explored as well as the importance of connective groups (churches, sororities and fraternities, HBCUs, bands and dance teams, athletic teams and social groups) and familial relationships within the African American community.

January 27, 2019, Lowcountry Oyster Festival, Charleston, SC,
<http://www.charlestonrestaurantassociation.com/oyster-fest/>

The Lowcountry Oyster Festival is the largest oyster festival in the world with fun contests like oyster shucking and oyster eating in addition to live music on the main stage, wine, domestic and imported beer, a children's area and food court.

January 31 and February 1-2, 2019, North Carolina Jazz Festival, Inc., Wilmington, NC,
www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com

One of the oldest Traditional Jazz Festivals in the country is the North Carolina Jazz Festival and this year it will be opened by Grenoldo Frazier, a local "piano-man" singing and playing Jazz numbers from the American Songbook. Come and hear some of the best Jazz from musicians around the world each evening and visit the destination itself during the day.

January 31-February 2, 2019, Southwest District Livestock Show and Rodeo, Lake Charles, LA, www.visitlakecharles.org

Family-friendly fun has never been better than at “The Greatest Show on Dirt.” The Southwest District Livestock Show and Rodeo, in its 80th year, is again held at the Burton Complex with exciting rodeo performances, livestock shows, a Queen’s Pageant, a stick-horse rodeo and more! Nightly performances by professional rodeo folks feature bucking broncos and thundering hooves sure to please the crowds. Don’t miss Western Heritage Days celebrating cowboys, the great outdoors and all things western including a shoot-out and petting zoo.

February 2019

February 1-2, 2019, Southern Invitational Truck and Tractor Pull, Murfreesboro, TN, <http://www.southernmotorsports.net/>

For 13 years, the Southern Invitational Truck and Tractor Pull has been exclusively at the TN Miller Coliseum in Murfreesboro. An event that grew from a love of pulling has turned into a premier event that gives national level teams a jumpstart to pulling season. Championship pulls are held on Saturday during the event and typically there will be standing room only (in a coliseum that seats 4,600). The competition is by invitation only.

February 2, 2019, Double Bridge Run, Pensacola, FL, www.doublebridgerun.com

Double Bridge Run is a 15K course that takes runners over two bridges crossing Pensacola Bay and the Santa Rosa Sound from the downtown area to the beach. A 5K course welcomes runners and walkers, and a Kids Fun Run is also part of the action along the Gulf of Mexico. There is a great bonus of breathtaking views along the course.

February 9, 2019, Covington Chocolate Tour 2019, Covington, TN,

<https://www.tnvacation.com/events/covington-chocolate-tour-2018>

The 7th annual Chocolate Tour in the Historic Downtown Covington Court Square is the perfect prelude to Valentine’s Day! Get your tickets and enjoy chocolate treats at over 20 businesses in downtown Covington and (this year) beyond. And, while you’re there, check out other merchants and catch dinner at a local restaurant.

February 9-10, 2019, 32nd Annual ARTSFEST, Stuart, FL, <http://www.martinarts.org/>

ArtsFest, a celebration of the arts, is a tribute to creative local talent as well as a mecca for visiting artists and artisans. Experience not only visual art, but also performance, music, literary, culinary and interactive art. Local high schools are allocated free booth space to further encourage the arts and visitors will enjoy additional fun on the Main Stage through music, dance and drama. Don’t miss the crowd favorite culinary competition *CHOPPED!* featuring local chefs. This year ArtsFest will offer small vignettes with themed content throughout the venue encouraging visitors to relax, engage and enjoy music, theatre, culinary and visual arts.

February 17, 2019, Sapphire Valley Great Outhouse Races, Sapphire, NC,

<https://skisapphirevalley.com/great-outhouse-races-ski-sapphire.html>

As the end of ski season approaches, Sapphire Valley Resort hosts the Great Outhouse Races, a wacky winter event where outhouses on skis are raced down the slopes. Picture this: Competitors dressed in the craziest of outfits and sitting on their thrones (toilet seats), fly down the slopes in their decorated outhouses built on skis while attempting to stay upright and avoid crashing into the snow banks. The fun starts with a parade and follows with the races which benefit local charities. No two years are the same and visitors never know what to expect.

February 18-24, 2019, The Florida Bluegrass Classic, Brooksville, FL,

<http://www.evansmediasource.com>

Bluegrass and Classic Country enthusiasts will delight in five days of entertainment from performers like TG Sheppard, Penny Creek, Big Cypress and more. Enjoy the musical arts, a classic car show, a military tribute, food and craft vendors at the Florida Classic Park (where there are also primitive and electric campsites available). This year's event will feature some new musical acts to accompany previous favorites. Look for headliners like The Grasscalls, Moe Bandy, Illrd Tyme Out and more.

February 22-24 and March 1-5, 2019, Bayou Country Mardi Gras, Houma, LA,

<https://houmatravel.com/do/mardi-gras>

Let the good times roll in Houma with a Mardi Gras celebration. Enjoy more than a dozen parades with colorful floats, marching bands, tons of great throws, Cajun hospitality and a family-friendly atmosphere. Each year the parades choose a new theme and change up the costuming and musical content for a completely different experience. Don't forget the King Cake!

February 23, 2019, Krewe Of Centaur Parade XXVII, Shreveport, LA, www.kreweofcentaur.org
Organized in 1991, the Krewe of Centaur pursues common goals of building a better community and the pursuit of good family fun. The Krewe of Centaur Mardi Gras Parade has grown into one of the largest parades in the Ark-La-Tex and rivaling most in New Orleans. Come and join the fun two Saturdays (10 days) before Fat Tuesday. Please note that new floats are added to the parade line-up every year.

February 23-24, 2019, The Anniversary of the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge, Currie, NC,

<https://www.nps.gov/mocr/index.htm>

History comes alive at the Anniversary of the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge, the site of the first significant victory for the Patriots in the Revolutionary War. The victory delayed a full invasion of the South by the British for almost four years resulting in NC being the first colony to formally pursue their independence. Visitors will enjoy more than 150 re-enactors on-hand to teach folks about life in the 18th Century as both military and civilian. Interpretive demonstrations will complete the living history examples that include cannon and musket firing, blacksmithing, woodworking, glass making and so much more. New this year, see an updated Interpretive Demonstration of the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge including opposing sides with death portrayed, movements of the battle, musket firings and bagpipes.