

**Visitor Services Project  
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve  
Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve during March 29-April 4, 1998. A total of 766 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 554 questionnaires for a 72% response rate.
- This report profiles Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Fifty-two percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Forty-eight percent of visitor groups were groups of two. Fifty percent of visitors were aged 41-65.
- Sixty-nine percent of visitors were making their first visits to Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Thirteen percent of the visitor groups spent less than a day in southern Louisiana. Sixty-three percent of visitors spent one to three hours at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Of those groups that spent more than a day in southern Louisiana, 45% spent 3 to five days in the area.
- United States visitors were from Louisiana (43%), California (7%), Illinois (6%), Michigan (4%) and 29 other states, plus Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. International visitor accounted for 10% of total visitation. Of international visitors, 37% were from Canada and 21% were from Germany.
- Visitors were most likely to use a private vehicle to arrive in southern Louisiana (52%) and arrive at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (62%). On this visit, the most common activities were viewing wildflowers (42%), visiting historic sites (38%) and viewing wildlife (36%).
- Friends or relatives (25%), previous visit(s) (22%), maps (23%), and travel guides/tour books (17%) were the most used sources of information by visitor groups.
- Almost one-half (49%) of visitor groups indicated they had a special interest in southern Louisiana history and culture. Visitor groups noted many reasons for visiting Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Forty-six percent of visitor groups indicated they wanted to learn about southern Louisiana history. Another 39% were interested in learning about southern Louisiana culture.
- The most commonly visited sites in the park and preserve were the French Quarter Visitor Center (29%), the Chalmette Battlefield (26%), and the Barataria Preserve visitor center (24%). The least visited site was the Prairie Acadian Cultural Center (4%).
- In regard to the use, importance and quality of services, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The services that were most used by 413 respondents were visitor center exhibits (75%) and information or assistance from park staff (60%). According to visitors, the most important services were information or assistance from park staff (91% of 226 respondents) and ranger-led tours/programs (89% of 89 respondents). The highest quality services were information or assistance from park staff (91% of 221 respondents) and ranger-led tours/programs (88% of 86 respondents).
- The facilities that were most used by 494 respondents were visitor centers (82%) and restrooms (75%). According to visitors, the most important facilities were trails (95% of 175 respondents) and highway signs (94% of 111 respondents). The highest quality facilities were trails (94% of 167 respondents) and roads (94% of 123 respondents).
- Ninety-five percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve as "very good" or "good." Less than one percent of groups rated services as "very poor." Visitors made many additional comments.

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the  
University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit; phone (208) 885-7129 or 885-7863.