FROM THE CABildo TO THE CREOLE COTTAGE
Historic Architecture in the French Quarter of New Orleans

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The St. Louis Cathedral in Jackson Square is undeniably one of the architectural crown jewels of New Orleans. The current structure dates from 1836, the previous structure being destroyed along with much of the city in a colossal fire. The current structure features a central bell tower designed by famed architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe, completed shortly before his death in 1820.

Benjamin Henry Latrobe (1764-1820)
Latrobe as a renowned British-born architect whose most notable works include the United States Capitol and the Waterworks of New Orleans. Among Latrobe's final work was the central bell tower in the St. Louis Cathedral.

The Vieux Carré
The French Quarter of New Orleans is home to one of the most fascinating and beautiful historic architecture in the American South. The variety of styles and buildings is as varied, colorful, and varied as the people who have called the city what it is today. From its origins as a trading post to its role as a frontier outpost of the French empire, to its rise as a Spanish colonial city, to its absorption into the United States, each period and people have left their mark on the city, specifically what is now known as the French Quarter or the Vieux Carré. It has become a crossroads to describe New Orleans as a "carri", but this comparison immediately holds a great amount of truth, as the food, language, music, and especially the architecture can attest to it. The influence of France, Spain, the Caribbean, the American South, and the west coast of Africa have mingled and molded in the city's buildings. Spanish Colonial buildings, Creole townhouses and cottages, shotgun houses, and Neoclassical American houses stand in colorful array up and down the streets of the French Quarter. The historic architecture of the French Quarter has also been defined by two great fires which engulfed the city in the late eighteenth century, the arrival of different peoples, the rise and fall of the sugar and cotton industries, and early nineteenth century politics all had their hand in shaping the city, literally and figuratively.

The Presbytère or the Casa Consul as it was known at its construction in 1791, was built to be the home of the Capuchin monks in New Orleans. The Presbytère, despite its name and intended function, never actually housed any clergy or even saw any other religious use. The building, designed by Guillaume and the Cabildo, took much longer to complete than the Cabildo, construction finally ending in 1813. Before the additions to the structure by the Baroness de Pontalba in the 1840s, the Presbytère, like the Cabildo, was a two-story, built of brick, with a flat, balustraded roof, decorated with urns.

The LaLaurie mansion on the corner of Royal and Governor Nicholls streets. Built in 1831, this house is a fine example of the Creole townhome style which is found throughout the French Quarter. Infamous for its connection to the budding American influence in New Orleans as a "gumbo," but this comparison nonetheless holds a great amount of truth; as the French Quarter has also been defined by two great infernos which engulfed the city in the late eighteenth century, the arrival of different peoples, the rise and fall of the sugar and cotton industries, and early nineteenth century politics all had their hand in shaping the city, literally and figuratively.

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