A view of the lower Pontalba building in Jackson Square. The upper and lower Pontalba buildings which flank either side of Jackson Square, were built by Micaela Almonester, the Baroness de Pontalba. The Baroness inherited much of the property from her father Andres Almonester y Rosas, the wealthy Spaniard whose money financed the St. Louis Cathedral, and made it her priority to beautify the area.

The LaLaurie mansion on the corner of Royal and Governor Nicholls streets. Built in 1831, the house is a fine example of the Creole townhome style which is found throughout the French Quarter. Infamous for its connection to Delphine LaLaurie, whose cruelty to her slaves earned her a place among the most infamous murderers of New Orleans. The LaLaurie mansion also exemplifies the period in which it was built and serves as a symbol of the transition period that the city underwent in the early nineteenth century. Not only does the building display hallmarks of Creole architectural styles, but it also shows signs of the budding American influence in New Orleans in the Neoclassical motifs that appear throughout the structure.

The St. Louis Cathedral in Jackson Square is undeniably one of the architectural crown jewels of New Orleans. The current structure dates from 1894, 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.

The French Quarter of New Orleans is known as one of the most fascinating and beautiful historic architecture in the American South. The variety of styles and buildings it is a cultural, colorful, and varied place, which has made the city what it is today. From its origins as a Spanish backwater colonial outpost of the French empire, to its time as a Spanish city, to its absorption into the United States, each period and people have left their mark on the city, specifically what is now New Orleans, or as a “Gumbo,” but this comparison nonetheless holds a great amount of truth to it; as the food, language, music, and especially the architecture can attest to it. The influences of France, Spain, and the Caribbean, the American South, and the west coast of Africa have mingled and blended in the city’s buildings; French Colonial buildings, Creole townhouses and cottages, Shotgun houses, and Neo-Creole 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 elements which shaped the city: the heat of the climate.

Justin C. Oakley
Dr. Perky Beisel

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 prison itself appeared to be a fair sized two-story structure, with the characteristic lack of finer detail which is representative of the great mass of colonial buildings from this period, especially those constructed in French Canada.

The Vieux Carré
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