

Pirate's Alley

New Orleans, LA

Public Spaces, Public Life
prepared by Jason Medeiros



Far left- Pirate's Alley between St. Louis Cathedral and the Cabildo

Left- Colorful facades of 19th century buildings on Pirate's Alley

Below- Couples have been getting married on Pirates Alley, next to St. Louis Chathedral, since 1815!

Far Below- Locals embrace the spirit(s) of Pirate's Alley.

For tourists and locals alike, Pirate's Alley in New Orleans holds a mystery and allure that keeps people coming back. Located in the French Quarter, this little walkway of unique cobblestone is squeezed between two of the city's most historic buildings. On the northern side is St. Louis Cathedral, arguably the oldest continuously running church in the country, and on the south side is the Cabildo, now a museum, but once the home of the area's Spanish rulers, and the place where the famous Louisiana Purchase was signed.

The birthplace of New Orleans, the misleadingly labeled French Quarter was actually ruled by the Spanish during the reconstruction after major fires in 1788 and 1794. The buildings of Pirate's Alley and the majority of the 'French Quarter' are Spanish style with plastered walls surrounding square courtyards. Second story balconies caged in ornate wrought iron give this part of the city a distinct flavor, adored by visitors and the five generations of residents who lay claim to these streets and buildings.

The alley is actually a system of two passages, one connecting Jackson Square on Chartres St. with the shopping district on Royal St., the other slicing in from St. Peter's Ave. to form a 'T'. Heavy tourist activity at Jackson Square and on Royal St. feed the alley with pedestrians during the day. At night, the Pirate's Alley Cafe and Absynthe House feeds the social scene from the center corner of the alley system.

History has given the alley its own eclectic program, featuring marriage ceremonies, art fairs and an occasional call from a local ghost.



Pirate Alley- Inside and Out

Pirates in Pirate's Alley?

The origin of the alley's name is shrouded in mystery, a condition embraced and exploited by locals and tourists alike.

"It is not mere coincidence that important events have occurred in our most historic city, the so called soul of America, in the legendary French Quarter of the city of New Orleans; founded in 1718. Some of these events are documented, some are not, merely 'known' by those who live here. In the 'City That Care Forgot', where our past and architecture have been preserved by 'neglect', it is often hard to separate fact from fiction."

www.piratesalleycafe.com

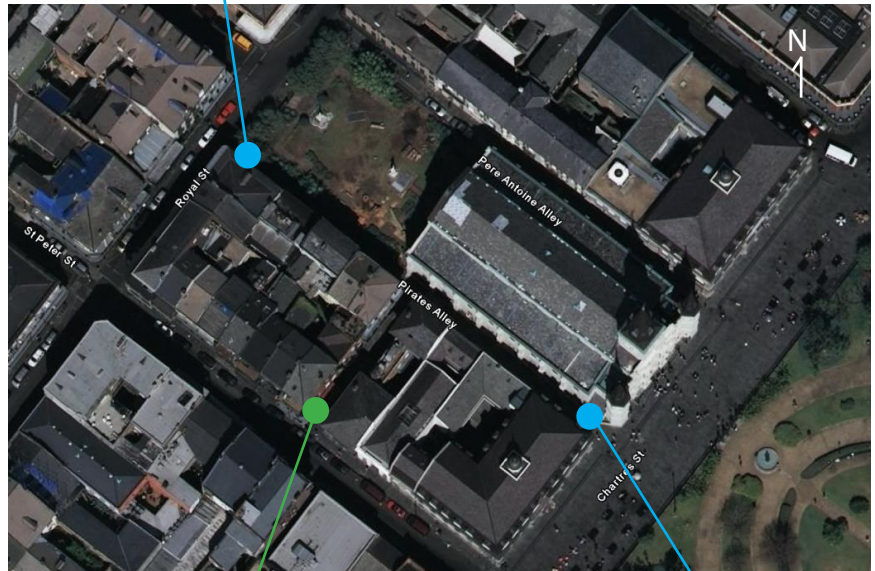


Jean Laffite, 1725-1825?
Fierce pirate of early New Orleans

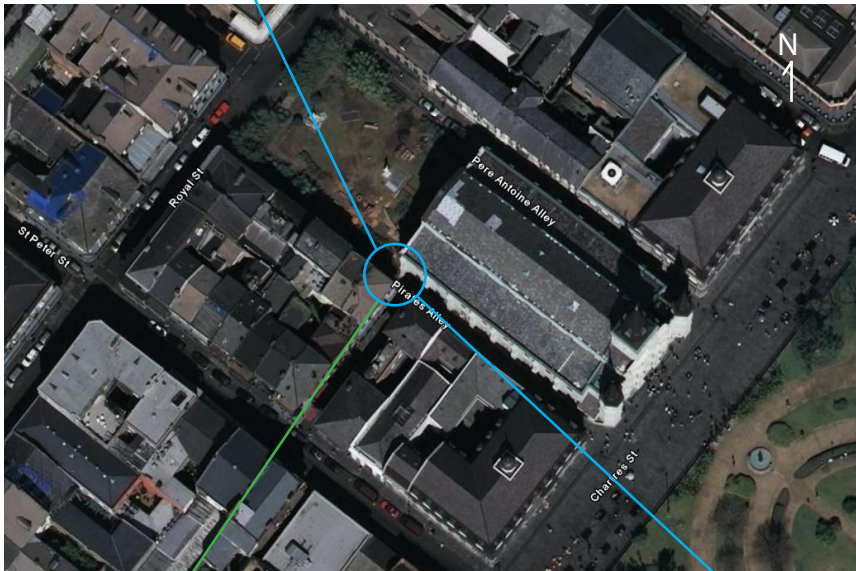


Modern Pirate of the Alley...

Looking IN, down Cabildo Alley and Pirate's Alley



Looking OUT from the corner of **Cabildo Alley** and **Pirate's Alley**



Perspectives:



Looking NW from Chartres St. Down Pirate's Alley. The alley is 600ft long and 16ft wide.



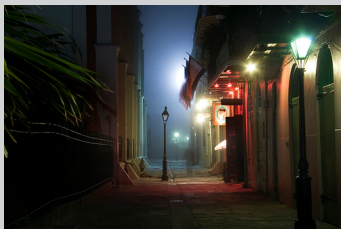
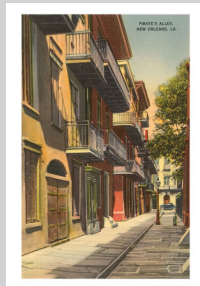
Areal view from the south, looking at the junction of Pirate's and Cabildo Alleyways.



Looking SW down Pirate's Alley from Royal St.

Context, the edges outside of Pirate's Alley

The lamppost at the corner of Cabildo Alley and Pirate's Alley remains one of the most commonly depicted icons in New Orleans.



Cabildo, 1799



St. Louis Cathedral, 1720



Jackson Square



SW edge of Jackson Square-shops and stores



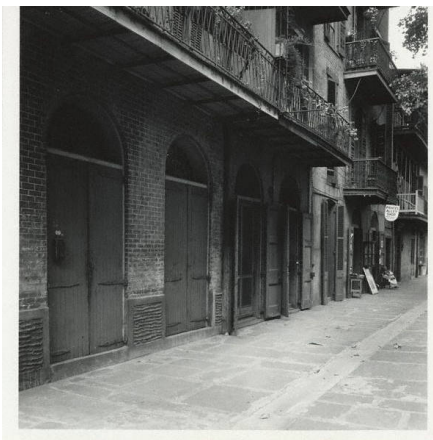
Pedestrian activity
Thursday, 10AM

Historic Buildings within Pirate's Alley

Public Spaces, Public Life

Faulkner House

Constructed in 1840, this building became the home of author William Faulkner, and where he penned his first novel Soldier's Play. It is now a tourist destination and a bookstore run by the Pirate's Alley Faulkner Society.



Bienvenue Thomas House

Located just SE of the Faulkner House, this building is preserved under the National Historic Register for its New Orleans style ironwork.

Pirate's Alley has long been home to one of New Orleans' most active art markets. Painter's in particular have used this venue to sell thier work to both local and out of town patrons.



1940- paintings for sale on Jackson Square, across from Pirate's Alley.



1970- artist sale in Pirate's Alley.



Recent photo, patrons walking into Pirate's Alley from Chartres St.

Social Life in Pirate's Alley



Patrons of the Pirate's Alley Cafe- located at the cross-roads between Cabildo and Pirate's Alleys- enjoy food and drink both indoors and out.



The Pirate's Alley Cafe is the social and geographic heart of the area. It is a bumping place for both tourists and locals. The party often starts here and spreads into the rest of the alley. But sometimes, the party begins in the street and sends costumed herds of revelers down the narrow cobbled passage to the Cafe!



Many visitors enjoy the iconic absynth, an old world specialty adored in New Orleans for its subtly psychotropic effects!



Mardi Gras fun lovers at the entrance to Pirate's Alley



Hornblowers outside the alley on Jackson Square



The strengths of Pirate's Alley as a public space come from its history and its location. As the source of interesting tales and yarns of ghosts and pirates, the alley is a strong draw on its own, however it benefits more so from its proximity to Jackson Square and Royal St.

The areas just adjacent to the alley are incredibly activated. Chartres St., at the mouth of the alley, is closed to regular traffic, creating a large promenade that draws people from the stores and shops lining the edges of Jackson square. This space becomes a place for entertainment and for walking, all of which happens right outside the alleyway....which offers a straight shot to more activity on Royal St.

The Alley itself is a walkway during the day, and only becomes activated at night by outdoor parties or social events. In a similar manner, daytime use is greatest during programmed art festivals. Despite the huge numbers of visitors, Pirate's Alley is still at heart a transitional space, a way to get from one side of the block to the other.

There is little if any ecological benefit offered by this space.

"There are spirits here! Souls from long ago who lived and died in these streets with such passion that they refuse to hide in the dusty ruins of the past. As you push ahead to the end of the fence the air is heavy with a scent of the damp vegetation and your skin is wet. You breath deeply, swallowing that thick hot air as if you are drowning, and you begin to melt into the city itself, the Vieux Carre, the heart of New Orleans. Look now to your left, up along the side of the Church. You have discovered PIRATES ALLEY!"

www.piratesalleycafe.com



Distinctive large
cobblestone paving



Unique and interesting facades
vary in color and material.



Second story balconies and iron-
work provide additional interest.

Central gutter provides historical
character and leads pedestrians
into the alley

Diagrams, photos, marginalia (arial 10 pt,)

**UNFORTUNATELY THIS IS STILL A WORK IN PROGRESS
I DID NOT HAVE TIME TO ADD MY SOURCES. I HAVE THE
INFORMATION AND WILL COMPLETE THE ASSIGNMENT
IN A TIMELY MANNER. MY APOLOGIES.....**

INSERT PAGES AS NEEDED.

To Insert a page, select window, pages, select create new page. This document is not set up as a template, so you will need to copy and paste from previous pages.