

metairie cemetery self guided tour

metairie cemetery self guided tour offers a unique and immersive experience for visitors interested in history, art, and architecture. This renowned cemetery, located in Metairie, Louisiana, serves as a resting place for many notable figures and showcases exquisite funerary sculptures and monuments. Exploring the grounds at your own pace allows for a personal connection to the stories behind the tombs and the cultural significance of the site. A self guided tour of Metairie Cemetery provides detailed insights into its origins, design, and the prominent individuals interred there. This comprehensive guide will cover how to prepare for your visit, highlight must-see monuments, and offer tips to enhance your experience. The following sections will help you navigate the cemetery's rich heritage and artistic marvels with ease.

- Overview of Metairie Cemetery
- Planning Your Self Guided Tour
- Notable Monuments and Mausoleums
- Historical Significance and Cultural Insights
- Practical Tips for Visitors

Overview of Metairie Cemetery

Metairie Cemetery is one of the most historically significant cemeteries in the New Orleans metropolitan area. Established in the late 19th century, it covers approximately 140 acres and is known for its elaborate tombs, ornate sculptures, and beautiful landscaping. Originally part of a race track, the cemetery was designed to emulate the grand garden cemeteries of Europe, combining natural beauty with architectural splendor. A metairie cemetery self guided tour allows visitors to appreciate the blend of Gothic, Egyptian, Classical Revival, and Art Deco styles represented throughout the grounds. The cemetery serves as a cultural landmark, reflecting the social and artistic history of the region.

Location and Accessibility

Located in Metairie, a suburb of New Orleans, the cemetery is easily accessible by car or public transportation. The main entrance is situated on Metairie Road, providing ample parking for visitors. The grounds are well maintained, with paved pathways and clear signage, making it conducive to

self guided exploration. The cemetery is open daily during daylight hours, allowing flexibility in planning your visit.

Architecture and Design Features

The design of Metairie Cemetery incorporates a variety of architectural influences, with an emphasis on monumental sculpture and intricate ironwork. Statues of angels, saints, and symbolic figures adorn many of the mausoleums, while elaborate carvings depict scenes of mourning, resurrection, and eternity. The cemetery's layout is organized into sections, each with distinctive design elements, allowing visitors to observe the evolution of funerary art over time during their metairie cemetery self guided tour.

Planning Your Self Guided Tour

Embarking on a metairie cemetery self guided tour requires some preparation to maximize the educational and aesthetic value of the visit. Understanding the layout, gathering relevant materials, and setting a comfortable pace are key factors for an enjoyable experience. Self guided tours offer flexibility, enabling visitors to focus on areas of personal interest and spend more time at notable sites.

Recommended Duration and Route

A typical self guided tour of Metairie Cemetery can last anywhere from one to three hours, depending on the depth of exploration. It is advisable to start at the main entrance and follow a logical path that covers the cemetery's most significant sections. Mapping out a route in advance or using a printed guide enhances navigation. Some visitors choose to divide the tour into multiple shorter visits to avoid fatigue and better absorb the historical context.

Resources and Guide Materials

Various resources are available to support a metairie cemetery self guided tour. Printed brochures, maps, and guidebooks provide detailed descriptions of monuments and historical background. Audio tours can also be accessed through mobile apps or downloadable files, offering narrated insights. Additionally, local historical societies and visitor centers may offer supplementary materials to enrich the experience.

Notable Monuments and Mausoleums

One of the primary attractions of a metairie cemetery self guided tour is the

opportunity to view the cemetery's remarkable monuments and mausoleums. These structures not only commemorate the deceased but also serve as works of art, showcasing craftsmanship and symbolism.

Famous Interments

Metairie Cemetery is the final resting place for many prominent individuals, including politicians, artists, and business leaders. Visiting their tombs provides a tangible connection to the region's history. Some notable interments include:

- **Leah Chase** – Renowned chef and cultural icon known as the “Queen of Creole Cuisine.”
- **Sam Butera** – Influential saxophonist and bandleader associated with Louis Prima.
- **Paul Morphy** – Legendary chess champion of the 19th century.

Architectural Highlights

The cemetery features an array of architectural styles that reflect the periods in which the monuments were constructed. Highlights include the Egyptian Revival style of the Pontalba family tomb, the Gothic spires of the Giacona mausoleum, and the intricate marble work on the Carroll family monument. Each mausoleum tells a story through its design, making the metairie cemetery self guided tour a rich visual and educational experience.

Historical Significance and Cultural Insights

Understanding the historical and cultural context of Metairie Cemetery enhances the appreciation of its features during a self guided tour. The cemetery serves as a record of the social dynamics, artistic trends, and community values of New Orleans and its environs.

Origins and Development

Metairie Cemetery was established in 1872 on the site of the former Metairie Race Course. The transformation from racetrack to cemetery reflects broader societal changes in post-Civil War Louisiana. The cemetery was designed to accommodate the growing population and provide a dignified resting place that mirrored the grandeur of European cemeteries. This development also coincided with advances in funerary art and landscape architecture.

Cultural Traditions and Symbolism

The cemetery embodies many cultural traditions unique to the region, including the use of symbolic motifs such as angels, crosses, and floral carvings. These symbols express themes of mourning, hope, and eternal life. Additionally, the cemetery reflects the diverse cultural heritage of New Orleans, including French, Spanish, African American, and Creole influences. These elements are evident in the iconography and inscriptions found throughout the grounds.

Practical Tips for Visitors

To ensure a rewarding and comfortable experience, it is important to consider practical aspects when planning a Metairie cemetery self guided tour. These tips will help visitors navigate the cemetery respectfully and safely.

Best Time to Visit

Visiting Metairie Cemetery during the cooler months or early in the morning can help avoid heat and crowds. Weekdays tend to be less busy, providing a more peaceful atmosphere for reflection and exploration. Seasonal events or guided tours offered by local organizations may also provide additional opportunities for learning.

Etiquette and Safety

Metairie Cemetery is an active burial ground and a place of reverence. Visitors should maintain respectful behavior, including speaking quietly, refraining from touching monuments unnecessarily, and adhering to posted rules. Wearing comfortable shoes is recommended due to the extensive walking involved. Bringing water and sunscreen is advisable, especially during warmer periods.

Accessibility Considerations

The cemetery provides paved paths and accessible entrances, but some older sections may have uneven terrain. Visitors with mobility challenges should plan accordingly and may benefit from assistance or shorter routes within the cemetery.

- Wear appropriate clothing and comfortable footwear.
- Carry water and sun protection.

- Follow all cemetery rules and respect other visitors.
- Use maps or guides for efficient navigation.
- Allow adequate time to appreciate key sites.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Metairie Cemetery self-guided tour?

The Metairie Cemetery self-guided tour allows visitors to explore the historic cemetery at their own pace using maps, brochures, or mobile apps that highlight notable monuments, mausoleums, and famous individuals buried there.

Where can I get a self-guided tour map for Metairie Cemetery?

Self-guided tour maps for Metairie Cemetery are available at the cemetery entrance, the official Metairie Cemetery website, or through various local tourism websites and apps dedicated to New Orleans attractions.

How long does a typical Metairie Cemetery self-guided tour take?

A typical self-guided tour of Metairie Cemetery can take anywhere from 1 to 2 hours, depending on how many points of interest you decide to explore and how much time you spend at each site.

Are there any notable historical figures featured on the Metairie Cemetery self-guided tour?

Yes, the self-guided tour highlights many notable figures including politicians, artists, and local celebrities, as well as impressive architectural monuments and unique sculptures that reflect New Orleans' rich cultural heritage.

Is there an app available to assist with the Metairie Cemetery self-guided tour?

While there may not be an official Metairie Cemetery app, several third-party apps and audio guides for New Orleans cemeteries can help enhance your self-guided tour experience by providing additional historical context and navigation.

Can I visit Metairie Cemetery for a self-guided tour at any time?

Metairie Cemetery is generally open during daylight hours, but it's recommended to visit during the morning or early afternoon for safety and to fully enjoy the tour. Always check current opening hours before your visit.

Are there any fees associated with the Metairie Cemetery self-guided tour?

There is typically no fee to enter Metairie Cemetery and take a self-guided tour; however, donations to help with maintenance and preservation are often appreciated.

What should I bring for a Metairie Cemetery self-guided tour?

For a comfortable self-guided tour at Metairie Cemetery, bring a printed or digital map, comfortable walking shoes, water, sunscreen, and a camera to capture the beautiful monuments and scenery.

Additional Resources

1. *Whispers Among the Tombstones: A Guide to Metairie Cemetery*

This book offers a comprehensive self-guided tour of Metairie Cemetery, revealing the stories behind its most famous monuments and mausoleums. Readers will explore the rich history and architectural beauty of the cemetery, learning about the notable figures buried there. Detailed maps and photographs enhance the experience, making it an indispensable companion for visitors.

2. *Silent Stories: Exploring Metairie Cemetery's Hidden Histories*

Delve into the lesser-known tales of Metairie Cemetery with this insightful guide. The author uncovers fascinating anecdotes about the people interred, from local legends to historical figures. Ideal for history buffs and curious tourists alike, this book brings the past to life through engaging narratives and a self-guided tour format.

3. *Monuments and Memories: The Art and Architecture of Metairie Cemetery*

This book focuses on the artistic and architectural elements that make Metairie Cemetery unique. Readers will learn about the various styles of tombs, sculptures, and mausoleums, and the symbolism behind them. It serves as a perfect resource for those interested in art history while exploring the cemetery at their own pace.

4. *Metairie Cemetery: A Self-Guided Historical Journey*

Designed for independent explorers, this guide provides a structured route through Metairie Cemetery with detailed descriptions at each stop. The book

highlights the cultural and historical significance of the cemetery within New Orleans. It also includes tips for respectful visitation and photography, ensuring a meaningful and educational experience.

5. *Echoes from the Past: Personal Stories from Metairie Cemetery*

Through a collection of personal stories and biographies, this book breathes life into the names etched on Metairie Cemetery's stones. Readers gain insight into the lives of notable individuals and everyday people who shaped the region's history. The self-guided tour format allows visitors to connect with these stories in situ.

6. *Gardens of Memory: The Landscape of Metairie Cemetery*

Explore the natural beauty and landscaping design that complement Metairie Cemetery's historic monuments. This guide discusses the flora, layout, and environmental aspects that contribute to the cemetery's serene atmosphere. It's an excellent resource for those interested in horticulture and landscape architecture during their visit.

7. *Metairie Cemetery Walk: A Photographic Tour*

Featuring stunning photography, this book captures the grandeur and solemnity of Metairie Cemetery. Accompanied by concise historical notes, the images guide readers through a self-paced tour of the cemetery's most iconic sites. Perfect for visual learners and photography enthusiasts who want to appreciate the cemetery's aesthetic.

8. *Legends and Lore of Metairie Cemetery*

This book explores the myths, legends, and ghost stories surrounding Metairie Cemetery, offering a spooky yet informative self-guided tour. It combines folklore with historical facts, providing a unique perspective on the cemetery's cultural significance. Ideal for readers interested in the paranormal and local storytelling traditions.

9. *The Metairie Cemetery Companion: Maps, Facts, and Fun*

A practical guide packed with maps, quick facts, and engaging trivia, this companion book is designed for visitors who want a flexible and fun self-guided experience. It covers essential sites, historical context, and visitor tips, making it user-friendly for all ages. The book encourages exploration and discovery throughout the cemetery grounds.

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