

Contact:

Marc Becker

Area Director of Marketing

Marc.Becker@neworleanshotelcollection.com

(504) 527-0407

For Immediate Release



NOLA Navy Week Highlights a Banner Year of Events for New Orleans in 2012

New Orleans –December 30, 2011 -On Twelfth Night, January 6, the Phunny Phorty Phellows, a satirical New Orleans Mardi Gras krewe dating back to 1878, will board a streetcar for a festive ride down St. Charles Avenue, officially kicking off Carnival season. Their motto, “A little nonsense now and then is relished by the best of men,” could be a rallying cry for a visit to the Big Easy in 2012, when the city is poised for a banner year of events, even by New Orleans high standards.

A highlight will be the festivities surrounding NOLA Navy Week April 17-23. Organized by the U.S. Navy and OpSail, New Orleans will be the first stop in a nationwide series of events officially commemorating the Bicentennial of The War of 1812 and the creation of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” An international fleet of tall ships will crowd the riverfront. U.S. Navy warships will be open for public viewing. The Blue Angels will crisscross the skies in crisp formation.

Every weekend before and after, New Orleans will also be dishing up an event to suit every taste. Music lover? Get your groove on at the French Quarter Fest (April 12-15) or get your jazz on at the Satchmo Summerfest (August 2-5,) when New Orleans’ musical legends and legends-to-be perform for free.

Sports nut? Come for the BCS National Championship (January 9) or the NCAA Final Four (March 30-April 4), when the Quarter will be jumping whether or not you have tickets.

Prefer supping and sipping? Enter the tomato-eating contest at the Creole Tomato Festival held at the French Quarter Market (June 9-10) or mix it up with

the nation's hottest mixologists at Tales of the Cocktail (July 24-29.) Just want to have fun?

Pack your red and white for the Running of the Bulls (July 13-15,) when the Big Easy Rollergirls armed with plastic bats chase the masses through the streets of the Central Business District.

From Fat Tuesday in February to Christmas New Orleans Style in December, and from large national festivals like the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival to small local ones like the Po-Boy Festival, New Orleans has "a little nonsense" in store for everyone in 2012. For a full listing of 2012 events, check out the official tourism site of the City of New Orleans at www.NewOrleansOnline.com.

Best Place to Stay

For French Quarter charm, location and value, the recently renovated boutique hotels, Le Marais and Dauphine Orleans Hotel are exceptional. Members of the New Orleans Hotel Collection, both hotels include freebies like wireless internet, deluxe continental breakfast, welcome cocktails, in-room bottled water, and use of their fitness centers, as well as below market valet parking rates. (Three NOHC historic FQ hotels currently under extensive renovations—Hotel Mazarin, Bourbon Orleans and the storied Audubon Cottages—will debut in early 2012 and will also offer a slew of complimentary amenities.) For more information on places to stay, check out www.neworleanshotelcollection.com

At **Hotel Le Marais**, just steps from Bourbon Street, a vibrant purple awning at the entrance to this gem is a harbinger of hip things to come. Inside, brightly colored modern chairs and original oils of bayou country anchor the chic décor while a heated saltwater pool ringed with chaises anchors the quintessential French Quarter brick courtyard. Splashes of purple continue in the contemporary guest rooms, which sport ergonomic desk chairs, flat screen TVs and iPod docking stations, and waffled cotton robes hang in the sparkling bathrooms. Start your engines with a signature cocktail at Vive!, the hotel's urbane watering hole.

For added value, stay two nights for Le Marais' "15% Off Our Best Rates" package. In addition to New Orleans Hotel Collection's standard complimentary amenities, it includes 15% off the best room rate as well as a premium room upgrade, which could land you in a balcony room overlooking the courtyard (both based on availability.)

717 Conti Street, 800.935.8740, www.hotellemarais.com

Repeat guests flock to the **Dauphine Orleans Hotel**, on a quiet street in the heart of the Vieux Carré, no doubt drawn to the friendly French Quarter hospitality and true French Quarter charm. While the historic building dates back to 1775, the 111 guest rooms are tastefully up-to-date with super comfy beds (most Tempur-Pedic® memory foam) in crisp white linens, including several with classic FQ balconies replete with tables and chairs. A small saltwater pool surrounded by a lush courtyard, overflowing with colorful flowers and towering palms, is a peaceful escape. A welcome cocktail at May Baily's Place, formerly one of the red-light district's most infamous bordellos, is a step back in time.

One of the Dauphine Orleans Hotel's most popular packages is the aptly named "Eat, Drink and Be Merry." Beginning at \$480 (based on double occupancy and availability,) in addition to New Orleans Hotel Collection's standard complimentary amenities, it includes a 2-night stay in a premium room, café au lait and beignets at [Café du Monde](#), a \$50.00 gift certificate for [Broussard's Restaurant](#), brunch at [Court of Two Sisters](#), a glass of wine at [Patrick's Bar Vin](#), valet parking and all taxes.

415 Dauphine Street, 800.521.7111, www.dauphineorleans.com

About the New Orleans Hotel Collection

The New Orleans Hotel Collection is a group of seven fine hotels in the New Orleans metropolitan region owned by local investors. Comprised of the Bourbon Orleans, Dauphine Orleans, Hotel Le Marais, Wyndham Riverfront, Audubon Cottages, Crowne Plaza New Orleans Airport and the new Hotel Mazarin, these are boutique and small upscale meeting hotels in prime locations throughout the city. For more information, visit the New Orleans Hotel Collection website:

www.neworleanshotelcollection.com.

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