

From your Co-hosts Whit and Kathy Byers and Lonny and Lavada Stevens

We recently spent a week in Natchez setting things in place for our Spring Rally. We had so much fun and found so many treasures that we wanted to share them with you. We hope you get as excited as we are about this rally.

The campground is right across the river from Natchez, MS in Vidalia, LA. It is right on the banks of the Mighty Mississippi River! You can see barges being pushed downriver or party boats cruising to Vicksburg. The sites have concrete pads and are in a beautiful setting.

The people of Natchez are incredibly hospitable and friendly. The city itself is the old South at its best. Cotton was the money crop. Planters had their plantations in the delta and built fabulous antebellum homes in Natchez to entertain their wealthy friends. One of the homes we toured, Melrose, is owned by the US Park Service. Beautiful house and grounds.

We also toured Rosalie Mansion, another antebellum home, on the bluff overlooking the river. It was taken over by the Union general who was in charge of that area. He had a perfect view of the river for several miles in each direction. The house is one of the few with original furnishings.

We ate some great food. The oldest building in the city is the Tavern. A great place for pizza and exotic cocktails (or just beer). You may have seen this tavern on the History Channel. It's haunted, they say. We also loved Biscuits and Blues. Roux 61, a seafood restaurant, is an absolute must. Many more places we liked. Too many to list here.

To begin your experience, we highly recommend The Natchez Visitor's Center across the river from Vidalia. A short film will give you an overview of the area. Pick up the Hop On-Hop Off bus here. For \$20 dollars you can ride all day, getting on and off at various stops in the city. For \$22 dollars you can ride for 2 days!

Because our last day was cold and rainy, we opted to do things that kept us inside. We drove through the old Natchez City cemetery which is famous for its age and beauty. It is located on the bluffs of the city. It's very ornate and dotted with moss-hung trees and flowering shrubs.

Again, trying to stay warm, we decided to tour the old Presbyterian Church. It's lovely. Imagine our surprise when we discovered the entire upstairs is a museum filled with black and white photos of the city in its early years, telling the history of the town. Beautifully done.

The Vicksburg National Military Park is only 68 miles north of Natchez. The battlefield, the gunboat Cairo, and the Old Courthouse Museum are worth seeing. It will take all day. You may want to add an additional day before or after the rally. There is a good RV park there – Rivertown RV Park on Hwy 61 South of the city.

These are just a few of the things we enjoyed as we explored the city. There's so much more. We just "scratched the surface." Come with us. We're looking forward to sharing this rally with you!!