

population is its great diversity of ethnic origins and cultures. Biloxi has attracted greater numbers of different cultural groups than has any other community in the state of Mississippi. In this respect Biloxi is more like Louisiana (especially New Orleans) in its cultural diversity.

Although Biloxi has a French base from its original settlement, it is not accurate to describe Biloxi as a French community, although many residents point proudly to their French heritage. Over the years and especially with the opportunities in the seafood industry, Biloxi is best described as a multi-ethnic community. During the 19th century many Biloxians were born in foreign countries and their sources of origin are varied: Russia, Scotland, Ireland, Dalmatia, Croatia, France, England, many nations of Africa, Switzerland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Italy, and the list goes on.

Among the important groups that have aided Biloxi's settlement and culture are the Polish immigrants from Baltimore that were brought in during the late 19th century to work in Biloxi's seafood canneries. These people were called Bohemians locally. Although most were temporary workers, many stayed to pursue opportunities in Biloxi.

Between the 1880's and the 1920's a large number of people from what is now coastal Yugoslavia settled on Biloxi's Point Cadet. First these people were called Austrians, but they are now better known as Slavonians or Yugoslavs. For many centuries natives of the Dalmatian coast have been recognized as expert sailors, seamen and fishermen. The coastal setting in Biloxi offered economic opportunity and political freedom for these people.

During the 1920's and 30's Biloxi received another large ethnic group, the Louisiana Acadians. The "Cajuns" or "Frenchmen" as they are called locally, came from another state, and only indirectly from a foreign country. Descendants of French colonists who were expelled from Nova Scotia by the British government in the middle 18th century, the Cajuns were also attracted to Biloxi from the sugar cane fields of Louisiana by opportunities in the seafood industry.

The most recent group of immigrants to the Biloxi area are the Vietnamese. These are people from coastal communities of South Vietnam that left when the Communists took over in the mid 70's. Many of these people ended up in New Orleans and heard word of the fishing opportunities along the Gulf Coast. They settled in the old neighborhoods of Biloxi that had earlier housed the relocation of the other seafood related ethnic migrations--Point Cadet and

Biloxi Folk Arts & Crafts:

Cast nets & trawls
Carnival Floats / Costumes
Sail Making
Native Boat Building
and Design

Cooking Specialties:

Seafood: Creole/Cajun: Slavic:

Shrimp - Boiled - Fried - Barbequed - Stuffed - Crabs - Boiled - (Fried) Softshell Oysters - Stewed - Casserole Fish- Boiled	Gumbo - Pie - Jambalaya - Dirty Rice - Dressings - Red Beans & Rice - Bay Sandwiches - Cornbread - (Caribbean)	Bakalor (Sa-ka-la) Pekivate (Kishmarita) Fou Ties Polenta Standa Date Chews
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Back Bay. Presently about 2,000 Vietnamese live in Biloxi and have become very involved in the boat building and seafood industries.

Other major groups that have played an important role in Biloxi's overall development include persons of African, Irish, German, Italian, Greek, and other European descents.

Lifestyle

Due to the cultural influences of the city's European roots, most Biloxians are a hard-working lot. But they play hard as well. Like most fun-loving cousins in nearby New Orleans, little excuse is needed for Biloxians to have a party, a parade or a festival!

Biloxi is thus, a festival town, a carnival town, a town of many celebrations. Some people attribute this to the mild climate; others to the bountiful resources and beautiful natural setting and others to the predominantly Mediterranean and Caribbean-based cultural origins of many Biloxians.

Whatever the reasons, at least six major parades, two dozen festivals, countless fairs, bazaars, and fishing rodeos and an assortment of various ethnic, historic, religious and other celebrations are staged each year.

Business is conducted, for the most part, in a relaxed, casual manner. Many important business and political decisions are made over informal lunches of seafood or sometimes over a few drinks with the waterfront in clear sight. The Coast's relaxed attitude toward life has probably existed since its original settlement in the early

18th century. Undoubtedly it took very little time for one of the early French colonists to exclaim "Laissez le bon temps roulez!" (Let the good times roll!)

Architecture

In the mid-1970's local historian Julia Guice directed a historic sites survey to locate and describe architecturally significant structures for preservation in Biloxi. The survey was supervised by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and included 500 buildings. Results of the survey were published for approximately 200 of the more prominent buildings and landmarks.

The architectural survey divided these structures into four descriptive categories:

- Folk** - early, owner-built homes dependent strictly on the local colonial customs and the owner's ingenuity (e.g., no uniform plans from an outside source were used). The predominant folk style in Biloxi was the "Creole Cottage" with its raised foundation, high-peaked, gable roof parallel to its front, an undercut front gallery (porch), and a four-room plan with no halls. Few folk cottages remain in Biloxi due to hurricanes, fires and urban development.

- Vernacular** - buildings indigenous to the Gulf Coast and constructed by pro-

Festivals and Celebrations...

Seafood Festival
Irish Heritage Festival
Heritage and Music Festival
Shrimp Festival (Blessing of the Fleet)
Old Biloxi Fall Festival
Christmas Thieves Market
Arts Fair for the Handicapped
Senior Citizens Festival
Greek Heritage Festival
Crawfish Festival
Fishing Rodeos (Kiwanis, Jaycees, etc.)
Twilight Concerts
Black Heritage Festival
Juneteenth
Ethnic Christmas Trees
Christmas Parade/Lighting of the Net Christmas Tree
Mardi Gras
Fireman's Day Parade
Oyster Festival
Mullet Festival
Vietnamese TET (New Year)

Proposed Festivals:

- Yugoslav Food Festival
- French Food Festival
- Italian/American Food Festival
- Back Bay Neighborhood Festival
- Point Cadet Neighborhood Festival
- Across the Bay Neighborhood Festival
- Jazz Festival
- Rock Concerts
- Mardi Gras Boat Parade
- Octoberfest
- Monthly Bazaars
- Heartise Park Neighborhood Festival
- Starving Artist Show and Sale
- Beck Park Festival

fessional builders, often from standardized plans. The "Biloxi Cottage" is the most popular vernacular type still remaining in large numbers. The Biloxi Cottage improved on the basic Creole Cottage with stock ornamentation and variations on roof style (gable, hip or a combination of both). Four "bays" (openings for windows or doors) opened onto a front gallery decorated with columns, spindles, balusters and scrolls.

Another popular vernacular-type is the "Shotgun," a narrow house three-to-four rooms deep and one-room wide. On most shotguns the roof extends over the front and sometimes onto the side to form a porch. Roof styles varied from gable, hip and gable-on-hip. Occasionally a lateral (side) wing was added to the basic narrow floorplan.

Biloxi Cottages and Shotguns are the most abundant, historically significant structures still existing in the city today. Most of these buildings are concentrated in the older parts of town, especially Point Cadet, Back Bay and Downtown.

- Popular** - styles which reflect national trends rather than local customs and are found throughout the nation. The most numerous popular styles include the "American Cottage" first introduced on the east coast and the "Bungalow" of southern California origin. The American Cottage has a symmetrical facade (front) with a central door and hall plan and either a hip or gable roof. Gabled roofs run parallel to the main facade. The popular Bungalow has a small rectangular floor plan with a

Architectural Styles



Creole Cottage



American Cottage



Biloxi Cottage



Bungalow



Shotgun



Colonial Revival

gabled roof that runs perpendicular to its front. The roof gable extends over the facade to form a front porch.

A number of both popular styles can be found throughout most of Biloxi's neighborhoods.

- Polite** - includes structures professionally designed to consider both function and aesthetics, reflecting national trends. These are the buildings most people consider to be "architecturally or historically significant" or "landmarks" because of their grand design schemes: The polite types include most of the more publicly-recognized styles like Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Romanesque, Gothic, Colonial, Tudor and Neo-Classical.

Most of these styles borrow on earlier classical types, larger floor plans of

two or more stories, and rich ornamentation which may include highly decorated galleries or porticos, "captain" or "widow walks," verandas, gazebos, towers, bay windows and other striking architectural features.

Although quite a few of Biloxi's earlier polite structures have been lost to fire, storms or "progress," a large concentration still remains on the beachfront north of Highway 90. A smaller concentration of polite style commercial buildings (circa: turn-of-the-century) can be found along the downtown Vieux Marche (Old Market).

Biloxi's architectural heritage and its natural, subtropical, marine environment have combined to form a cultural landscape that is at once familiar and unique to Biloxians—a landscape that says "home."

A Sampler of Architectural Landmarks...



Father Ryan House



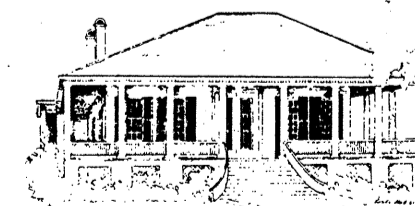
Old Brick House



Magnolia Hotel



Tullis Manor



Beauvoir



Biloxi Lighthouse