

DAUPHIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT WALKING TOUR

DAUPHIN  
STREET  
HISTORIC  
DISTRICT  
WALKING  
TOUR

THE BATTLE HOUSE RENAISSANCE MOBILE

HOTEL & SPA

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# A walk back in time

ENJOY DAYDREAMING OF WHAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN LIKE IN THE DAYS PAST OF MOBILE'S GRAND HISTORY, AND ABSORB THE BEAUTY OF THE ARCHITECTURE AND THE HERITAGE THAT SURROUNDS YOU.

## 2 SOUTH WATER STREET DANIELS, ELGIN & CO. BUILDING,

*circa 1860*

The front of the Elgin Building is one-of-a-kind in Mobile. It is a cast iron facade ordered from the catalogue of the Badger Iron Works Co. in New York and installed on a brick building. The facade is based on the waterfront palazzos of 15th and 16th century Venice. The facade was designed by T. H. Giles.

## 5 DAUPHIN STREET POLLOCK & BERNHEIMER BUILDING, *1904*

This ornate building was designed by the architectural firm of Rudolph Benz and Sons. Rudolph Benz was a popular Mobile architect in the Victorian era. Many of his buildings remain today. The facade of this building consists of a glass and metal storefront with highly decorative pilasters. The building was originally six stories tall. The top three stories were lost sometime between 1925 and 1955. The building underwent major renovation in 1985.

## 1 SOUTH ROYAL STREET ABRAHAM PINCUS BUILDING, *1891*

Designed in 1891 by Rudolph Benz, this commercial brick building is in the Queen Anne Style. The east and south corners have turrets with pyramidal roofs. The building also has a variety of decorative motifs and cast iron balconies.

## 101 DAUPHIN STREET VAN ANTWERP BUILDING, *1906*

The Van Antwerp Building was designed by George Rogers, and is the first reinforced concrete building constructed in Mobile and at 11 stories was its earliest skyscraper. It remains an important

## *Three Hundred Years of Heritage*

Mobile was established in 1702 by the French in their bid for an empire in America. In 1711, the settlement moved down to its present location where the Mobile River and Mobile Bay meet, making it an important center for the Louisiana Territory. One of the principal streets in the new settlement was Dauphin, named for the son of Louis XIV. Under the Spaniards who ruled from 1780-1813, the street was called St. John or Galvez Street. When the Americans took possession of Mobile in 1813, the street was renamed Dauphin. In the 1830's, cotton was an important commodity at the port of Mobile. At that time, Mobile was the third busiest port in the nation.

As the City's principal commercial corridor, Dauphin Street acquired such a reputation for quality, that the slang phrase "like walkin' down Dauphin Street" came to denote anything of exceptional quality.

A fire in 1839 destroyed the older wooden buildings on the street and the two- and three-story brick commercial buildings that we see today began to be built. Many of the early structures had the straight lintels and dentil moulding of the Federal Style. The reconstruction period brought the acceptance of new building trends such as the Italianate Style and cast iron facades. The last decades of the 19th century brought the Victorian era and revivalism which continued into the 20th century. The Dauphin Street area has experienced a recent revival because of the historic preservation movement.

landmark in downtown Mobile. The building is decorated with classical motifs such as the swag and garland on the cornice. The rounded northeast corner contains a large cartouche containing the initials “GVA” for Garet Van Antwerp, the druggist who built the structure to house his pharmacy and drug store.

**102 DAUPHIN STREET**  
**LEVY - WOLVERTON BUILDING,** *circa 1875*

Currently a two story building with rounded windows with cast iron hoods on the second floor, this building was originally three stories. The decorative sills for the third floor windows are still visible at the cornice line.

**1 NORTH ROYAL STREET**  
**BURKE BUILDING,** *circa 1875*

This two-story, brick building covered in stucco was built in 1875 and was originally a three-story building. The round topped windows have cast iron hood moulds. An attached, two-story cast iron balcony which wraps around the corner was added during a 1988 renovation.

**31 NORTH ROYAL STREET**  
**AM SOUTH BANK BUILDING,** *1965*

This 34-story International style skyscraper was the tallest building in Mobile when it was built.

**26 NORTH ROYAL STREET**  
**BATTLE HOUSE HOTEL,** *1908*

The original Battle House was built in 1852 and burned in 1905. The “new” Battle House was designed by Frank M. Andrews. The seven-story brick structure has accented corners, and the first two stories are tan brick massed as stone. The two Battle Houses were visited by such notables as Jefferson Davis, Admiral Raphael Semmes, Generals Bragg, Beauregard, and Taylor. It was at the Battle House on October 27, 1913 that Woodrow Wilson etched his name in history by declaring just before WWI that the United States would never again wage a war of aggression.

**11 NORTH WATER STREET**  
**RSA TOWER** *2006*

Although the RSA Tower is a contemporary high-rise structure, designed by TVS Alabama, Inc. it contains the three elements found in classical high-rise buildings. The Base is designed to mirror the richness of the surrounding street-scape and add a pedestrian scale.

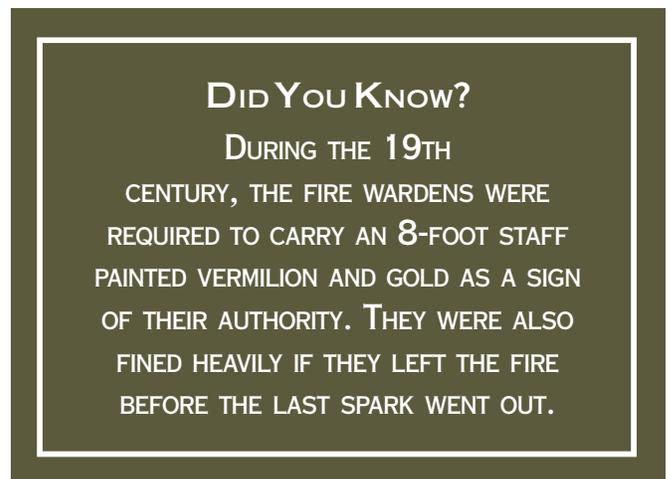
The Shaft gives the building its vertical characteristic and is the majority of the building facade. The Crown tops the building as it meets the sky and is seen from far away, acting as a beacon to Downtown Mobile.

**68 ST. FRANCIS STREET**  
**FIRST NATIONAL BANK BUILDING,** *1906*

This two-story Classical Revival brick, stone and terra-cotta building was designed by Watkins, Hutchisson and Garvin. It has a central pediment and doors with broken segmental arches.

**106 ST. FRANCIS STREET**  
**MERCHANTS NATIONAL BANK BUILDING,** *1928*

This 23-story skyscraper has Neoclassical elements along the street. The upper stories of the building are stepped. This structure is capped with a pyramidal metal roof. The use of light and dark brick shows the Deco influence. It is now owned by Regions Bank.



**6 ST. JOSEPH STREET**  
**FRANKLIN FIRE ENGINE COMPANY #3,** *1852*

This two-story stucco over brick building is in the Italianate style. A contemporary balcony was added during a 1991 renovation. In 1889, the fire company was incorporated into the newly formed city fire department.

**110-112 DAUPHIN STREET**  
**WALGREEN'S BUILDING,** *circa 1938*

This building is a good example of the simple, undecorative downtown commercial property built in the mid-20th century. At the core of this building, traces might remain from an 1870's structure. Alterations were so extensive however, it is hard to tell whether the older structure survives.

### 115 - 117 Dauphin Street

#### **KRESS BUILDING, 1913-1914**

The Kress Building was designed by Kress' architect, Seymour Burrell. Originally "L" shaped, the building is now cruciform and has fronts on Royal, Dauphin, St. Emanuel and Conti streets. Highly decorated to attract the eye, the facade has variegated tiles and an elaborate cornice which can still be seen above the modern storefront. The St. Emanuel Street entrance is a later Art Deco design by G. F. Sibbert.

### 125-127 DAUPHIN STREET

#### **MCCRORY BUILDING, 1924**

Art Deco in design, this building was built to hold McCrory's 5 & 10 Store. It is a two story brick structure with the angular composition and linear hard edges typical of the Art Deco Movement.

### 169 DAUPHIN STREET

#### **SPIRA & PINCUS BUILDING, 1899**

Designed by Rudolph Benz. A Classical Revival building in stone, the Spira & Pincus Building has rusticated sills, lintels and pilasters on the second and third floors. The facade also contains a heavily bracketed overhanging cornice and Neoclassical capitals.

### **BIENVILLE SQUARE, circa 1850**

Bienville Square was named for Mobile's founder, Jean Baptiste le Moyne Sieur de Bienville, a naval officer of France who became the governor of French Louisiana. Bienville Square began its transition into a "Public Square" in 1824 when the U. S. Congress passed an act transferring a large plot of land to the City of Mobile. This plot was the site of the old Spanish Hospital on the southwest corner of the block. The Act specified that the property be forever used as a city park.

In 1834 the city began acquiring additional land and by 1849 the city held clear title to the entire block. In the 1850's improvements were made which included walkways, a now gone cast iron fence, benches, and an ornamented central mound.

The Square became a popular place to promenade, and by the spring of 1890 installation of an "Acanthus Fountain" in the center was underway. The fountain

was placed in honor of Dr. George A. Ketchum, a prominent physician, civic leader and president of the Bienville Water Works. Other changes made at this time included paved walks and placement of twelve stone pots and urns to be used as planters. In 1905, Teddy Roosevelt spoke in the Square about the importance of the Panama Canal to the port of Mobile. The current bandstand was built in 1941, as a gift to the people of Mobile from Sears Roebuck and Company. Bienville Square continues to be a focal point of activity in Mobile.

### 203 DAUPHIN STREET

#### **SCHEUERMANN BUILDING, 1893**

Also designed by Rudolph Benz, the two-story dark red brick Victorian structure has a new storefront on the first floor. The second floor contains a central arched window framed by small granite colonnettes. The parapet is inscribed with the date 1893.

### 209 DAUPHIN STREET

#### **MRS. G. T. TURNER BUILDING, 1886**

The A&M Peanut Company or its predecessor, the Planters Peanut Shop, has been in business since 1947. All nuts are roasted on the premises in a machine dating from 1907. This two-story brick building has second story corner pilasters of dressed and rusticated blocks. The hood mouldings over the windows have an accented keystone and side brackets. The building is capped by a parapet formed of a series of decorative mouldings with a stepped pediment over a central bay. This building was designed by James H. Hutchisson.

### 210 DAUPHIN STREET

#### **ANN McCAW BUILDING, circa 1885**

Designed by Rudolph Benz, the facade of this building has floor length windows with Neoclassical entablatures on scroll brackets and an original cast iron balcony on the second floor.

### 220 DAUPHIN STREET

#### **ABRAHAM SPIRA BUILDING, 1891**

Designed by Rudolph Benz. Although the first floor has been modernized, the second floor still retains the original Victorian detailing such as the slate roof and the small turret over the west bay. This building was originally designed for retail use but it served as a theatre from 1908-1931.

**222, 224, 226 DAUPHIN STREET,  
DEMOUY BUILDING, *circa 1879***

These three two-story buildings share a common facade. They have all been restored differently, but the paneled architrave, heavy twin scrolled medallions and cornice help to show their common designs.

**225 DAUPHIN STREET  
SANGROUBER VAN-ANTWERP BUILDING, *1899***

This building was constructed in 1899 by architect W. H. Hammond. The building is three stories in height and is constructed of brick covered with stucco. The facade is two bays wide, each bay defined by recessed panels which are horizontally scored flanking two pairs of windows on the second level. On the third level, two sets of tripled windows are placed between pilasters which have composite capitals. A contemporary storefront and balcony were added in 1993 after extensive renovation by the first micro-brewery to open in the State of Alabama.

**6-8 SOUTH JOACHIM STREET  
SAENGER THEATRE, *1926***

Designed by Emil Weil, this two-story grand movie palace incorporates French and Italian Renaissance motifs. The interior features dramatic ornamentation and rich furnishings. Recently restored to its original grandeur by the Centre for the Living Arts, the theatre offers a variety of theatrical and musical performances and movies throughout the year.

**270 DAUPHIN STREET  
CROWN THEATRE, *circa 1909***

The Crown Theatre has recently been renovated. It has a fanciful stucco facade with a broken cornice and curved parapet.

**15 NORTH JOACHIM STREET  
ST. FRANCIS STREET UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH *1895***

This brick Victorian church has a prominent square tower at the corner with a pyramidal roof and cross. The structure has large, round-top stained glass windows and a raised sanctuary.

**255 ST. FRANCIS STREET  
NEVILLE BUILDING, *circa 1890***

This is a two-story brick townhouse with sidehall entrance and cast iron rail above a bay window.

**257 ST. FRANCIS STREET  
JOSEPH SILVER HOUSE, *1845***

This Federal style building with Greek Revival detailing was built in 1845 by Joseph Silver, a master mason practicing in Mobile at the time. Originally the eastern half of a double house, the building has since been divided in its ownership and is visually differentiated from the neighboring building. The main entrance to this three story brick structure is at

the second level and is reached by a cast iron stairway that rises from the sidewalk. The cast iron porch dates from the 1920's and replaced a wooden one. The main entrance is framed by pilasters and a classic architrave. The shallow cornice is ornamented with a brick dentil course. The building is noted as the office of Dr. George A. Ketchum, the founder of the Bienville Water Works and the man for whom the Bienville Square fountain was named.

**259 ST. FRANCIS STREET  
JOSEPH SILVER HOUSE, *1845* ✓  
*1926***

This house was built in 1845 as part of a double house. It was altered in 1926 with a design by C. L. Hutchisson, Jr. The west elevation was stuccoed and scored to simulate ashlar masonry.

**7 NORTH JACKSON STREET  
CAVALLERO HOUSE, *circa 1885***

This two and one-half story brick residence has a second story balcony and a pair of gable dormers.

**300 DAUPHIN STREET  
B.C. TURNER BUILDING, *circa 1848* ✓  
*1905***

The west half of this building was completed in 1848 and the east half in 1905. The present Classical Revival facade dates from 1905. The variety of motifs and repetitive bays help to give the building a strong sense of rhythm. The building now houses several offices and a residence.

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
IN 1907, WHEN STATE LEGISLATION WAS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING PASSING A PROHIBITION BILL, A DELEGATION LED BY MOBILE'S MAYOR TRAVELED TO MONTGOMERY TO TRY AND PREVENT IT. N.J. McDERMOTT, PRESIDENT OF THE BANK OF MOBILE, WIRED MOBILE LEGISLATORS THAT "UNLESS ANTI-PROHIBITIONISTS WIN, PLEASE GIVE NOTICE THAT MOBILE IS PREPARED TO SECEDE FROM THE STATE OF ALABAMA."

**354 DAUPHIN STREET**  
**SIDNEY SMITH BUILDING,** 1848

This two-story Federal brick structure has a wooden storefront on the first floor. A modern cast iron gallery was added during a 1994 renovation.

**356 DAUPHIN STREET**  
**JACQUES CHIGHIZOLA BUILDING,** 1858

This two-story brick Federal style building has an original cantilevered iron balcony.

**358 DAUPHIN STREET**  
**JOHN MCGUIRE BUILDING,** 1852

This three-story Federal brick building has a second story with a full cantilevered iron balcony, and the third story cantilever is two bays wide.

**301 DAUPHIN STREET**  
**CATHEDRAL SQUARE,** 1996

The buildings in Cathedral Square were torn down in 1979 to create a public park dominated by the facade of the Cathedral. Only minimal improvements were made at this time. In 1992 plans to further improve the park were developed. The design of the park reflects the basilica floor plan of the Cathedral with a semicircular fountain at one end that can be used as a stage area for concerts and theatrical performances.

The implementation of these improvements took place in 1996. The buildings around the square make up the Cathedral Square Arts District.

**4 SOUTH CLAIBORNE STREET**  
**CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION,**  
1834-49, 1890, 1895

The Cathedral serves as the seat of the Catholic Archdiocese of Mobile. Dating from 1703, this congregation is the oldest in the Central Gulf Coast region. Designed by Claude Beroujan, the Cathedral is sited on the Colonial burial grounds. Although the cornerstone was laid in 1834, financial problems delayed the start of construction until 1842. The dedication was held on December 5, 1850. Various members of the Hutchisson family of architects also worked on the building: cornice and roof (1849); portico (1872-1890); and towers (1890-1895). The Cathedral features German art glass windows by Adolph Meier, a bronze canopy over the altar, and 14 hand-carved stations of the cross. A number of

bishops who have served Mobile rest in the crypt under the floor toward the front of the church. The surrounding cast iron fence from Wood and Miltenberger of New Orleans dates from 1860.

**5 NORTH CLAIBORNE STREET,**  
**AUGUSTINE MEAHER HOUSE,** 1901

A two-story brick townhouse with attached cast iron veranda. The house still has its original fence in front.

**7 NORTH CLAIBORNE STREET,**  
**JOHN DAHM HOUSE,** 1878

A two-story brick townhouse with attached cast iron veranda. The two-story glass and wood addition was constructed in 1929.

**351 ST. FRANCIS STREET**  
**SCOTTISH RITES TEMPLE,** 1921

Designed by George Rogers, this Egyptian Revival building has stuccoed battered walls and is the only Egyptian Revival building in the city. The entrances are marked by a pair of sphinxes.

**407 DAUPHIN STREET**  
**JACQUES CHIGHIZOLA BUILDING,** 1854

This is a Federal style, stuccoed brick building with a gabled roof and fire wall.

**417 DAUPHIN STREET**  
**MARIA CRAWFORD BUILDING,** 1900

This typical turn-of-the-century Classical Revival commercial building has many interesting details such as corbels with a rosette design, segmental arches, and a fret band which contrasts in color and material with the brick of the main body.

**454-456 DAUPHIN STREET**  
**LOUIS MONIN BUILDING,**  
*circa 1867*

This building shows the Italianate influence popular in the Reconstruction era. The first floor has a wood and glass storefront. The upper facade features a dentil course and a paneled parapet with "lights." The cantilevered balcony was added during a 1997 renovation.

## DID YOU KNOW?

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, WHEN THE CRY OF "FIRE!" WAS HEARD, THE FIRE ALARM WAS SOUNDED BY BEATING ON A METAL WAGON WHEEL RING WITH A HAMMER. VOLUNTEERS WERE ALWAYS IN A HURRY TO GET TO THE FIRE BECAUSE THE COMPANY THAT RESPONDED FIRST GOT PAID. BY LAW, EVERY CITIZEN WAS REQUIRED TO HAVE A FIRE BUCKET, AND THREE WERE REQUIRED IN COTTON WAREHOUSES, TAVERNS AND HOTELS.

### **7 NORTH LAWRENCE STREET** **WASHINGTON FIREHOUSE #5,** *1851*

Built in 1851 at a cost of \$5,500, this two-story brick Greek Revival building was constructed to house the privately run Washington Fire Company.

### **522 DAUPHIN STREET** **STEELE BUILDING,** *circa 1858*

This Federal, two- and one-half story brick building has an attached cast iron balcony with roof. The balcony and the pair of dormers were added in a 1992 renovation.

### **551 DAUPHIN STREET,** **HENRY CHAMBERLAIN BUILDING** *circa 1865*

This two-story brick structure has cast iron columns and segmental arches on the first floor. A second floor canopy wraps around the corner.

### **601-605 DAUPHIN STREET,** **WINTZELL'S BUILDING,** *1891*

A two-story clapboard structure with decorative brackets supporting the roof overhang. This is the only wooden structure designed for commercial use remaining on Dauphin Street, downtown. Wintzell's Restaurant has been in business in this block since 1938.

### **13 NORTH DEARBORN STREET,** **CREOLE FIRE HOUSE #1,** *1842*

Designed by James H. Hutchisson, this two-story brick structure with arched central bay and full height second floor windows was built to house the Creole #1 Fire Company. It was the first volunteer fire company in Mobile, founded in 1819 by members of Mobile's Creole community. The fire company was absorbed into the city department in 1888 and finally disbanded in 1970. The Creoles were people of mixed heritage who formed their own schools, churches and

social organizations. It is said that the Creole #1 was usually the first to get to the fire because they bought rejected race horses, including Jack, the horse who could follow his nose straight to the fire. Horse drawn equipment was used until 1924. The company remained in the Dearborn Street house until the Central Fire Station was built in 1926.

### **701 ST. FRANCIS STREET** **CENTRAL FIRE STATION,** *1926*

This is a three-story brick structure with a ceramic tile roof and fire truck bays. The city fire department was created in 1888. Before Central Fire Station was built, the fire companies were privately run operations. The small firehouses still used by the private companies were closed and centralized in the new station.

### **709-711 DAUPHIN STREET** **SCHUMACHER CARRIAGE WORKS,** *1904, 1866 respectively*

These are a pair of two-story brick buildings, one with an arched carriage bay at front. Two more carriage entrances were turned into windows as the building's use changed.

### **755 DAUPHIN STREET** **MEAHER BUILDING,** *circa 1930*

This is a one-story brick building with five wooden storefronts. The upper facade is detailed with a basket weave of light and dark bricks and a dentil course at the cornice. Now a restaurant, the building once housed a pecan factory and a landscaping business.

### **753 ST. FRANCIS STREET** **CONVENT OF MERCY,** *1908*

A three- and one-half-story stucco structure with a two-story attached porch housed the Convent of Mercy Catholic girl's school until 1968. The building was converted into residential condominiums in 2001.