

Mardi Gras season kicks off with king cake, revelry

By REBECCA SANTANA January 5, 2019



Trending on / Shiffrin wins

Corn syrup in sweetener

Super Bowl a



Click to copy

RELATED TOPICS

- New Orleans
- Mardi Gras
- Parades
- Parties
- U.S. News
- Christmas

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — As the rest of America winds down from the parties, overeating and merriment of Christmas and New Year’s, New Orleans keeps the party going. Mardi Gras season officially kicks off Sunday, Jan. 6 is often referred to as Epiphany, Twelfth Night or Three Kings’ Day and commemorates the day the Bible says the three wise men reached the baby Jesus. For weeks, the city is taken over by elaborate parades and people stuffing their faces with sugary king cake. The party culminates on Fat Tuesday, which this year falls on March 5.

Here’s a look at some of the things to expect this Mardi Gras season:



TWELFTH NIGHT

A number of parading groups often dubbed krewes take to the streets [Sunday](#) to kick things off. One group parades through the French Quarter to honor the fallen French hero, Joan d’Arc. Another group, Phunny Phorty Phellows, heralds the arrival of Carnival with a streetcar ride down St. Charles Ave. wearing costumes. This year they’ll be trailed by a new group called the Funky Uptown Krewe, who will ride on a separate streetcar with New Orleans producer and rapper DJ Mannie Fresh performing. Craig Mangum, the krewe’s founder, said they’ll also be handing out CDs and mixtapes featuring New Orleans artists such as Bonerama and Hot 8 Brass Band. Riders will also be wearing costumes, he said: “As funky as you want.”

LET THEM EAT CAKE

Probably the biggest single sign that Mardi Gras season is upon us is king cake. The ring-shaped cakes often decorated in the Mardi Gras tri-color of purple, green and gold can be found at bakeries, restaurants, office parties and homes across town during the season. Cakes can be plain or filled with fruit and cream or laced with cinnamon. Bakers go all out.

For example, Alton Osborn, who owns [Bywater Bakery](#) with his wife Chaya Conrad, is this year introducing three savory king cakes — crawfish, boudin and spinach/artichoke — to accompany their nine sweet king cakes. They’re also hosting a full lineup of live music Sunday to entertain restaurant goers. King cakes account for a “huge part of our business,” Osborn said. He’s got high hopes for the new savory king cakes: “It’s going to blow some minds.”

PARADE CHANGES

Traditionally the bulk of the parades happen around the two weekends ahead of Fat Tuesday. Scheduling changes this year mean that [Krewe of Chewbacchus](#), a walking parade devoted to science fiction, is rolling earlier than in previous years. Richard Riggs, one of the three overlords that organizes the parade, said the change came because city officials said they didn’t have the policing



time through the city's Uptown neighborhoods.

A total of three groups were affected by the changes, said city spokesman Trey Caruso, who said the “growing popularity” of the groups requires “more coverage from our public safety assets.”

Chewbacchus, for example, has grown from a few hundred members when they started in 2011 to about 1,800 participants last year, Riggs said.

But with no other competing parades on their new date of Feb. 9, Riggs said they're optimistic that they'll “have a bigger turnout than usual.”

OUTSIDE OF NEW ORLEANS

Towns and cities in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama also host parades and events during Mardi Gras season. Last year, Alabama's state tourism agency purchased 10 billboards around New Orleans and southern Mississippi to promote Carnival in Mobile. Rather than mentioning Mobile specifically, the signs told drivers how many miles they are from “America's original Mardi Gras.” And they didn't mean New Orleans. New Orleans officials took the ribbing in stride with then-Mayor [Mitch Landrieu](#) saying: “There's only one great Mardi Gras in the world.” And he didn't mean Mobile.

In southern Louisiana's Cajun country, costumed participants ride on horseback or run through towns stopping at houses to collect ingredients for gumbo in a tradition called Courir de Mardi Gras.

—

Follow Santana on Twitter [@ruskygal](#).

PAID FOR BY MUSICIANSFRIEND.COM

Kustom PA Profile 100

Portable PA





Mardi Gras season kicks off ...

Top Stories

Topics ▾

Video

Listen



Free Shipping



High court upholds texting suicide manslaughter conviction

BOSTON (AP) — The involuntary manslaughter conviction of a young woman who encouraged her...

21 mins ago

Ad Content

New Orleans, Louisiana Drivers Are Stunned

By This New Rule

Promoted: EverQuote Insurance Quotes

Actress: "Eating This, Every Morning, Has

Changed My Life"

Promoted: ActivatedYou Supplements

Before you renew Amazon Prime, read this

Promoted: Wikibuy

Drivers who switch save an average of \$668 on car insurance.

Promoted: Progressive

Neighbors: Plane 'sounded like a...

YORBA LINDA, Calif. (AP) — A small plane shook homes and "sounded like a missile" as it broke apa...

Yesterday

1 deputy killed, another wounded in 12-hour standoff in Ohio

CINCINNATI (AP) — A sheriff's deputy was shot and killed during a 12-hour standoff at an ...

2 days ago

Ad Content

2019 Crossover SUVs That Might Take The Country By Storm

Promoted: Crossovers | Search Ads



Mardi Gras season kicks off ...

[Top Stories](#)

[Topics](#) ▾

[Video](#)

[Listen](#)



These Cars Will Last 250,000 Miles - Is Yours On This List?

Promoted: BuzzDrives

Vatican clarifies pope on issue of...

VATICAN CITY (AP) — The Vatican on

Wednesday clarified comments by Pope Francis ...

13 hours ago

The Latest: 5 die after small plane...

YORBA LINDA, Calif. (AP) — The Latest on a small

plane crashing into a Southern California ...

2 days ago

AP NEWS

[Top Stories](#)

[Video](#)

[Contact Us](#)

DOWNLOAD AP NEWS

Connect with the definitive source for global and local news



MORE FROM AP

[ap.org](#)

[AP Insights](#)

[AP Definitive Source](#)

[AP Investigative Spotlight](#)

[AP Explore](#)

[AP Books](#)

FOLLOW AP

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

[About](#) [Contact](#) [Customer Support](#) [Careers](#) [Terms & Conditions](#)

All contents © copyright 2018 The Associated Press. All rights reserved