



Southern Traveler

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BATON ROUGE'S Bicentennial



Plus

Colorful Gardens
of Arkansas

Weekend In
Oxford

Exploring
the Outer Banks



Step into the Civil War in central Louisiana

History comes alive on the first weekend of March in the annual Blue and Gray on the Red, a Civil War-era re-enactment and educational event in Pineville and Alexandria in central Louisiana.

The Blue and Gray on the Red consists of four days of events from March 2–5, with most of the activities taking place at Forts Randolph and Buhlow State Historic Site in Pineville.

At the historic site, Union and Confederate camps will

showcase how soldiers lived. Among the re-enactors, Union doctors will discuss their surgical techniques, which are not for the faint of heart.

The battle re-enactments will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Other activities will include an author's row and a free sampling of food from 19th-century recipes. Also, a baseball game will be played at the same spot where Union regiments once played. And in Alexandria, there will be



Re-enactors will invite visitors to explore their camp.

Alexandria/Pineville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

lectures and a dinner theater.

Admission to the historic site is \$4 for visitors 13–61, and dinner theater tickets are \$25 per person. ●

Call (800) 551-9546 for details, or click on alexandriapinevillela.com/BlueandGray.

Arkansas saluting WWI centennial

With “civilization itself seeming to be in the balance,” President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress for a Declaration of War against Germany on April 2, 1917, calling on Americans to help “make the world itself at last free.”

As the nation recalls the 100th anniversary of its entry into World War I this year, Arkansas is honoring its many

contributions to freedom and the war effort with a yearlong commemoration. The state has formed a World War I Centennial Commemoration Committee to shine a light on an important chapter in the history of Arkansas, which was home to two Army train-

Soldiers on a march in Little Rock at Cape Pike, which later became Camp Robinson. Arkansas State Archives



ing camps, active Red Cross chapters, an aviation training facility, and more.

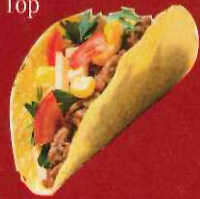
To help people find World War I exhibits, activities, museums, and memorials, the committee created a website, WWIArkansas.com, that serves as a clearinghouse of information. Among the exhibits listed is “The Great War: Arkansas in World War I,” which examines Arkansas’s role in the war. After appearing at the Randolph County Heritage Museum in Pocahontas on April 20–22, it will visit museums in several other cities. ●

For more information, click on WWIArkansas.com.

Crescent City chefs tackle the taco

In a city known for exquisite cuisine, top chefs from across New Orleans, La., will turn their culinary expertise to the humble taco for the inaugural Top Taco Festival.

To be held on March 23 at Riverwalk’s Spanish Plaza on Canal Street, the event will feature dozens of chefs and mixologists competing in four categories: Top Creative Taco, Top Traditional Taco, Top Creative Cocktail, and Top Margarita. Judges will pick the champions, and visitors will get to vote on People’s Choice awards.



General admission is \$65 per person (age 21 and older), which includes unlimited “Grand Taco” tastings and samplings of handcrafted tequila. Additional packages and tickets are available on the festival’s website, including a VIP experience aboard the *Creole Queen* paddlewheeler. A portion of the proceeds will benefit One Heart NOLA, an organization that raises funds and awareness for New Orleans’ foster children.

As guests savor the vibrant flavors on their plates and in their glasses, they’ll sway to the rhythms of live performances by the Latin ensemble Los Po-Boy-Citos and the Afro-Cuban jazz and groove band Otra. The festivities will take place from 6:30–9:30 p.m. ●

For details and to purchase tickets, visit toptaconola.com.