

FROM DIRTY RICE BOUDIN BALLS TO CAJUN FRIED CHICKEN, CELEBRATE MARDI GRAS BY EATING LIKE A LOCAL

NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 11, 2017 – In New Orleans, Mardi Gras isn't a sprint, it's a marathon ... of eating. Parade-route fried chicken, steaming pots of jambalaya and muffalettas thick with meat, cheese and olive salad are as common as beads on the parade route.

"Mardi Gras isn't a day – it's a season, a mindset, a New Orleans way of life," said New Orleans culinary authority and cookbook author Poppy Tooker. "It's the time of year when families and friends come together without invitation, knowing instinctively where and when to meet. Food, fun and family – that's what Mardi Gras is really all about."

This year, Carnival season begins on Twelfth Night (12 days after Christmas), January 6, and lasts through Mardi Gras Day, or "Fat Tuesday," February 28. Zatarain's – a seasoned New Orleans favorite since 1889 – offers these easy recipes, flavors and insider tips to turn everything from a casual gathering to a weeknight dinner into an authentic Big Easy affair throughout the Mardi Gras season wherever you are.

Parade-Route Staples: In New Orleans, parade-watching is a family event, with kids hoisted up on decorative ladders and given fishing nets to catch beads and stuffed animals. These staple dishes are found up and down the parade route and are enough to feed friends, family and neighbors throughout the day:

- [Slow Cooker Chicken and Shrimp Jambalaya](#) – Cook up a batch of Zatarain's Jambalaya Mix ahead of time in your slow cooker. Toss in chicken, shrimp, diced tomatoes, and frozen peppers and onions for the easiest, hands-off Mardi Gras meal yet.
- [Cajun Fried Chicken and Pickles](#) – Pickle brine and Zatarain's Creole Seasoning adds serious flavor to this crispy staple. Serve hot or cold with a splash of hot sauce.
- [Fully Loaded Cajun Bloody Mary](#) – Friends will happily volunteer to save the spot on the parade route when you serve them this Bloody Mary, rimmed with Creole seasoning and topped with bacon and skewered shrimp.
- [Shrimp Po' Boy](#) – Arguably New Orleans most famous sandwich, this Po' Boy is stuffed with fried or blackened shrimp. Just make sure you get a good piece of French bread.
 - Not a shrimp lover? Try a [Grilled Chicken Po'Boy with Spicy Creole Mustard!](#)
- [Deviled Eggs with Creole Mustard](#) – Upgrade the classic deviled egg with Zatarain's Creole Mustard and smoked paprika.

Mardi Gras Party Dishes: These no-fuss recipes are perfect for Mardi Gras celebrations big or small anywhere you live:

- [Olivia Manning's Ultimate Jambalaya Bar](#) – Let guests customize their Jambalaya with add-ins like sautéed onions, green pepper, and meat or seafood.
- [Savory Shrimp Beignets](#) – While beignets are usually topped with mountains of powdered sugar, this savory version is stuffed with shrimp and scallions. Serve with a zesty remoulade sauce.
- [Muffaletta Pasta Salad](#) – Take all the classic ingredients of a muffaletta sandwich – meats, cheese, olives – and put it in a pasta salad. Toss with a creole mustard vinaigrette.
- [Dirty Rice Boudin Balls](#) – Made with Zatarain's Dirty Rice Mix, these tasty New Orleans boudin bites are warm and cheesy on the inside, crispy on the outside. Serve with a sweet mustard dipping sauce.
- [Skillet Jambalaya Dip](#) – This twist on the classic Louisiana dish is chock full of shrimp, andouille sausage and creole flavor.
- [King Cake Cupcakes](#) – These delectable cupcakes are a mini version of the traditional King Cake, a sweet Carnival treat for home, office or parties.



Dirty Rice Boudin Balls

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Classics for the Krewe: From the New Orleans version of paella, jambalaya, to the ultimate stew, gumbo, these warm, flavorful dishes are Mardi Gras mainstays – meant to feed a crowd whether you're hosting a party or a Fat Tuesday family dinner.

- [Feed your Krewe Jambalaya](#) – This quintessential Mardi Gras dish was influenced from Spanish rule in the area during the mid-to-late 1700s. You'll find large pots of it cooking throughout Mardi Gras season.
 - Want a from-scratch version? Try this [Classic Jambalaya](#) recipe.
- [Uptown Red Beans and Rice with Turkey Sausage](#) – Historically, pots of red beans were cooked all-day on Monday – laundry day – in Louisiana. Now, it's eaten any day of the week. This version adds turkey sausage and cooks in just 35 minutes!
- [Creole Gumbo](#) – Originating in southern Louisiana during the 18th century, gumbo is defined by a dark, hearty roux that thickens the stew and imparts serious flavor. Make it simple by using Zatarain's Gumbo Base or Gumbo Mix.
- [Creole Potato Salad](#) – Whether to serve up gumbo with rice or potato salad (or both) is a hotly debated issue in New Orleans households. Whip up this recipe and decide for yourself!

Visit [Zatarains.com](#), or check us out on [Pinterest](#) or [Facebook](#) for more recipes and tips!

Note to media: To download high res images and recipe files, please visit <http://zatarains.new-media-release.com/2017mardigras/>.

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About Zatarain's

Since 1889, Zatarain's has been the authority on the fun and flavor of New Orleans. From its humble beginnings producing root beer extract, the company has grown to make more than 200 food products from Rice Dinner and Side Dish Mixes, Frozen Entrees, Pasta Mixes, Breadings, Seasonings and Spices to Seafood Boils, Creole Mustard and other products based on authentic New Orleans–Style recipes and seafood preparation. Now, people across the U.S. recognize that to capture the true flavor of New Orleans cuisine, you have to "Jazz It Up with Zatarain's." For information, recipes and Zatarain's online store, visit www.zatarains.com.

Zatarain's is one of McCormick & Company's (MKC) portfolio brands. As a global leader in flavor, McCormick has built a portfolio of leading flavor brands that enhance people's enjoyment of food all around the world. Every day, no matter where or what you eat, you can enjoy food flavored by McCormick. *McCormick Brings Passion to Flavor™*.

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