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Coffee Exhibit Brewing at Louisiana State Museum

New Orleans' coffee legacy is explored in an exhibition by the Louisiana State Museum, entitled *Freshly Brewed: The Coffee Trade and the Port of New Orleans*, the exhibit is housed in the Arsenal, adjacent to the Cabildo, on Jackson Square.

Throughout the first part of the 19th century, the port of New Orleans experienced phenomenal growth. The flow of commodities down the Mississippi River made New Orleans the second busiest port in the country, while goods from all over the world were making their way up the river through the port and on to towns throughout the Mississippi Valley. One of the most valuable products to make the trek was coffee.

In 1846 alone, over \$8 million in mostly Brazilian coffee came through New Orleans - which by that time was nicknamed the "Logical Port" for Latin American commodities. Following the lean Civil War and Reconstruction years, the port's growth resumed in part because of the burgeoning coffee industry and port improvements made by early 20th century municipal leaders. Now, nearly a century later, New Orleans is the number one coffee port in the country, and the industry provides jobs for workers at all levels.

Many of the items in *Freshly Brewed* were obtained from J. Aron & Company, Inc., a New Orleans importer that recently closed its doors after nearly a century in business. A salesman's trunk, a "cupping table" complete with tasting cups, sample pans, tasting spoons and two roasters are among the tools of the trade shown. Vintage photographs, including several of beans being unloaded on the docks in the early 20th century and the Reily Company's roasting room c. 1920, provide a nostalgic look back.

The final section of the exhibit, which touches on the introduction of chicory and describes local specialties such as café brulot and café au lait, explores the special relationship between New Orleanians and coffee.

The Louisiana State Museum Cabildo is open Tuesday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4 for students, senior citizens and active military, and children 12 years and under and school groups are admitted free. Admission to the Arsenal is included with Cabildo admission. The Cabildo and the Arsenal are wheelchair accessible. Individuals with other special needs are requested to call the Museum to make advance arrangements. Call 800-568-6969 or visit <http://lsm.crt.state.la.us> for more information.