

The following poem, written back in 2008, recalls all the things that make Springtime in New Orleans a special time. During the Coronavirus stay-at-home lockdown, many of these events have been cancelled and are truly missed.

## **New Orleans Rites of Spring**

Scanty, shanty Irish dolls  
Chant "Go Bragh" at Parasol's,  
The largest crowds, the greenest beer,  
You know that Spring is almost here.

St. Joe altars, if you please,  
Sawdust on my *Milanese*.  
*Pignolatti*, just the thing,  
New Orleans knows it's almost Spring.



At NOMA, flowers fill each room,  
It must be time for "Art in Bloom".  
Art with Nature, whispering low:  
Blossoms 'round the Bouguereau.

Every March they flock to see  
The festival for Tennessee  
And yelling "Stella" is their plea  
Below a Quarter balcony.



Dogwood fragrance fills the air,  
Pink azaleas everywhere,  
Perino's registers go "Ka-ching"  
Thanks to all that gardening.

Spring Fiesta, crinoline queens,  
Their hoop skirts gliding down Orleans,  
A carriage ride before their fling,  
New Orleans loves its rites of Spring.

There's sailing on Lake Pontchartrain,  
Your shirt now has a snowball stain,  
April brings a little rain,  
But then the sun comes out again.

Wisteria hanging up above,  
New Orleans is the place for love,  
Spring fever lasts much longer here,  
And then there's always Rhonda Shear.

Easter has parades all day,  
One from Arnaud's, one is gay,  
After Mass they all take flight,  
And once again we all wear white.



Quarter Festival, Jazz Fest, too,  
There're just so many things to do.  
What other city has such zing?  
New Orleans loves its rites of Spring.

Sipping juleps, soon it's May,  
Formosan termites on the way,  
They're a pain, but "what the hey!"  
Go get those traps, or you can spray.



Hidden courtyards lush with ferns,  
Fountains splash near big clay urns,  
Her beauty lies behind the veil,  
You have to learn the secret trail.

March, then April, crowned by May,  
New Orleans Spring's like *décolleté*,  
Not revealing everything  
Of its lovely rites of Spring.



*Seersucker facemask, fashionably acceptable now that it's after Easter*

**NED HÉMARD**

New Orleans Nostalgia  
"New Orleans Rites of Spring"  
Ned Hémard  
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