



For Saints fans in Washington, another reason to celebrate with compatriots

By [Petula Dvorak](#)
Friday, February 5, 2010

For some, pulling time in D.C. is considered major hardship duty.

What? No [king cake](#) in the office? No "second-line" [dance](#) through the restaurant after dinner? No grillades and grits on Sunday morning?

Whaddaya mean there's no [Professor Longhair](#) on your iPod?

And this Sunday, when the New Orleans [Saints](#) play in the Super Bowl and the French Quarter will be going bonkers with beads and daiquiris and black and gold and an insane brass-band beat coming from doors, Washington will certainly feel grayer, navier and khakier than ever before for these folks.

It's always a culture shock for Louisianans when they leave their piquant and lyrical home towns for a new place, especially one as uptight and imposing as the nation's capital.

They are crestfallen when they get to a city where February isn't Mardi Gras season -- it's just the slushy, gray space between Christmas and spring break, the month you're reminded that you don't have a Valentine.

I wasn't even born in New Orleans, but after a stint at the [Times-Picayune](#) and a French Quarter wedding, I felt like an oyster pulled from her shell when I moved here a decade ago in the middle of winter.

Advertisement No, The Washington Post does not consider Mardi Gras a paid holiday. No one knew what the heck my king cake was when I brought it to the office.

"It has a plastic baby in it? Isn't that a liability? What if someone swallows it?" they asked.

Real Louisianans know how to deal with this. They find each other. And because Louisiana primarily exports chefs, musicians and politicians, D.C. has one of the largest and most raucous expat communities around.

They connect easily. On the street, when they spot each other's LSU or Tulane sweat shirts, they laugh and hug, or they smile in a restaurant when a fellow Bayou Stater sitting next to them answers the 504 number coming in on their cellphone with "Who

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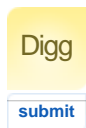
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dat?"

The [Louisiana State Society](#) gathers often. They have brunches, dinners, social hours.

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