Mobile, Alabama was founded in 1702 by French settlers who ruled until 1763 when they lost the French and Indian War. As a result, Mobile and other French territories east of the Mississippi were ceded to England. The Spanish Governor in New Orleans captured Mobile in 1780 from the British during the Revolutionary War. Spanish rule continued until 1813 when the town was captured by the United States military during the War of 1812. Mobile was originally named Fort Louis de la Mobile to honor France’s king and to acknowledge the local Mobile (or Maubilla) Indians.

Artifacts and interactive exhibits from many historical periods are used to tell Mobile’s story at the History Museum of Mobile, which also displays a collection of miniature houses created by a local resident. A second museum site is the partially reconstructed Fort Conde, which had protected Mobile from 1723 to 1820 and now serves as the city’s official Welcome Center. The Phoenix Fire Museum, a third museum site, is in the restored home of the Phoenix Volunteer Fire Company No. 6 and houses turn-of-the-20th-century horse-drawn steam engines and early motorized vehicles.

Mobile’s new GulfQuest National Maritime Museum celebrates the Heron Lakes community features contemporary single- and two-story brick or stucco homes built on the Heron Lakes Country Club golf course primarily in the early 2000s.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Mobile has 55 parks and squares and provides 8 recreation centers, 2 golf courses, and 2 tennis centers. Bienville Square is anchored by an elaborate wrought-iron fountain and is the site of social and civic gatherings. Cathedral Square, the “front yard” of the Cathedral Basilica of The Immaculate Conception, is another popular public gathering space and hosts a farmers’ market, art festivals, music concerts, and fashion shows in the spring and fall.

The Mobile Museum of Art, Azalea City Golf Course, Mobile Botanical Gardens, and Playhouse-in-the-Park are located in the 720-acre Langan Park, which the Mobile BayBears minor league team plays. The Hank Aaron Park offers softball, baseball, and football fields; basketball and tennis courts; and a playground.

Neighborhoods

Although primarily commercial in nature, downtown Mobile has 3 residential areas. Church Street East Historic District features Queen Anne and shotgun style homes that date from the 1820s to 1900. Housing styles in the DiTonti Square Historic District include side-hall dwellings, Italianate, townhouses, and Oakleigh Garden Historic District features homes built in the 1820s and 1830s in Colonial Revival, Dutch Colonial, and Craftsman styles. Nearby Florence Place has homes built in the Spanish revival style. Old Dauphin Way Historic District has a mix of houses in Foursquare, Colonial Revival, and Queen Anne styles from the late 1800s. Oakleigh Garden Historic District features homes built in many styles, including Foursquare, bungalow, shotgun, Italianate, Gulf Coast cottage, and Queen Anne, and date from 1850 to 1925.

Mobile is served by the following health facilities:

- Mobile Infirmary Medical Center: 689 licensed beds
- Providence Hospital: 349 licensed beds
- Springhill Memorial Hospital: 263 licensed beds
- University of South Alabama Children’s and Women’s Hospital: 152 licensed beds (Specialized pediatric/maternity hospital)
- University of South Alabama Medical Center: 406 licensed beds
- BayPine Behavioral Health: 60 licensed psychiatric beds
- Infirmary LTAC Hospital: 22 licensed long-term acute care beds

City Stats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Population</td>
<td>194,624</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Statistical Area Population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Per Capita Personal Income, Mobile, AL, MSA</td>
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Photograph courtesy of Tad Denson.