Please start your tour at any station, be aware of your physical distance and your visit length

Station A: The Legacy of the Dufilho Family and Museum History
The building that houses the Pharmacy Museum was constructed in 1823 for Louis Dufilho Jr., America’s first licensed pharmacist. In 1816, Louisiana became the first state to require licensing for medical practitioners, including pharmacists, physicians, dentists, and midwives. The building, classified as a Creole Townhouse, served as apothecary and residence for the Dufilho family until 1855. The building changed hands and was abandoned around the turn of the 20th Century, because of hurricane damage. The Pharmacy Museum opened in 1950 with donated collections, most from local apothecaries and Loyola University. Original to the site is the stone floor made of the Belgian slate that was commonly used as ship’s ballast. On display in the Dufilho Family exhibit case, are artifacts that were excavated in a privy dig, conducted in the left rear corner of the courtyard in 1988.

Station B: The Methods of Administration
The Methods of Administration exhibit case addresses the various ways in which drugs were administered in the 19th Century. Unlike most pharmacists today, 19th Century practitioners compounded medicines from scratch using plant, mineral, animal and insect ingredients. The mortar and pestle—a mixing bowl and wand—was used to pulverize and mix dried herbs to be made into pills, cachets (rice-flour wafers that were the predecessor to the gelatin capsule), liquids (including tinctures, syrups, infusions, liquid extracts and infusions), plasters and injectable medications. Artifacts on display include the pill roller, powder paper folders, a cachet maker, invalid feeders, needles and injectable medication kits.

Station C: Opium
Opium is derived from the Popaver somniferum, or opium poppy. One of the most commonly prescribed drugs in the 19th Century, opium was used widely as a painkiller, surgical anesthetic, sedative and antidiarrheal. Understanding of drug addiction was in its infancy during the second half of the 19th Century, but opium products (including laudanum, morphine and heroin) were available over-the-counter until the passage of the 1914 Harrison Act that required a prescription for narcotics.

Station D: Questionable Medical Practices
The 19th Century was a turning point in the history of medicine. With the discovery of surgical anesthesia and the Germ Theory of Disease, physicians and their patients entered the realm of “modern” medicine. As great as the advances were, however, many 19th Century medical practices may be considered “questionable” today. Until about 100 years ago, patients were subjected to the use of leeches and lancets in the practice of bloodletting to cleanse the body of “poisoned” or excess blood; leeches would be purchased at the pharmacy and taken to the physician or barber for application. Today, leeches are being used in surgical reattachments and skin grafts to remove congested blood and stimulate circulation.

Vanity prevailed over science in the use of gold and silver plated pills. Physicians prescribed known poisons including arsenic, lead and mercury. In turn, medical advancements of the 21st and 22nd Centuries will reveal the “questionable” treatments of today.

Station E: Surgical Instruments
The Surgical Instruments exhibit features surgical and diagnostic instruments, some dating to the time of the Civil War. Amputation knives and saws, bullet extractors, stone searchers, and trocars provide a chilling reminder of a time when procedures were performed without sterilization. Featured artifacts include the c. 1850 trephination drill and Hay’s Saw.
used to perform cranial operations and the tonsil guillotine whose use marked a right of passage for many children. Although pharmacists usually did not perform surgical operations, many did stock surgical equipment in their stores for sale to medical professionals.

**Station F: Soda Fountain**
The soda fountain was invented in American pharmacies as early as the 1830s as another method to make bitter medicines more palatable. The Museum’s soda fountain—in working condition with the exception of lead pipes—was carved in Philadelphia around 1855 and is made of Italian rose and black marble. The powdered or liquid medicine was added to sweet-flavored syrups to disguise the strong herbal or chemical taste; sparkling waters were added because the bubbles were thought to have curative properties and stimulate the system. Many of today’s popular sodas, including Coca-Cola, Pepsi, 7-Up and Dr. Pepper, were invented by pharmacists and sold as tonics.

**Station G: Voodoo Potions**
Pharmacists in 19th Century New Orleans also sold Voodoo powders and potions. Under colonial rule, Africans brought to Louisiana in slavery were required to be baptized Catholic; Louisiana Voodoo is a blending of African beliefs and deities with Catholicism. The Creoles enjoyed a unification of French, Spanish, African and Native American cultures that allowed for the practice of Voodoo—especially the use of potions and Gris-Gris bags—to permeate society. Although the practice of Voodoo was not acceptable in all social circles, believers and the curious from the upper class could purchase Voodoo potions at their local pharmacies with relative anonymity. Love and luck potions were sold “under-the-counter” using a numbering system that inspired the hit song “Love Potion #9.”

Voodoo healers also enjoyed a vast knowledge of the use of herbs to treat common ailments. In fact, Voodoo healers recommended molded bread in the treatment of syphilis years before the discovery of penicillin.

**Station H: Patent Medicines**
Patent medicines—regarded as the “miracle elixirs” and “cure-alls” of the 19th and early 20th Centuries—are arranged in the cabinets along the wall according to the ailments that they were supposed to treat. Although most were never patented, the name stems from the manufacturers’ desire to keep the ingredients secret. Many of the tonics contained alcohol and narcotics that effectively masked the patients’ symptoms while doing little to affect a cure. Consumers beguiled the flashy and exaggerated sales pitches of the traveling medicine shows and testimonial ads were convinced to purchase many medicinally worthless tonics in the name of good health. In fact, it was not until the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906—requiring the listing of alcohol and narcotics on the label—that the government began to legislate consumer protection from unscrupulous pharmaceutical purveyors.

**Station I: Pharmacists Work Area**
Located in the right rear corner of the Pharmacy Museum, the Prescriptions & Compounding exhibit contains both tools used in compounding and prescription files. One of the very rare pieces in the collection is the 1860s hand-sewn linen prescription file with pockets for filing family prescription records; A large ledger book, chronicling the years 1867 and 1868, contains a written record of drugs that the pharmacist dispensed, possibly without a prescription. During the 19th Century, Louisiana pharmacists were only required to have a physician’s prescription to dispense medications deemed poisonous. Suspended from the ladder are hanging prescription files. Prescriptions would be skewered on a wire for storage; the system was used through the 1950s and the round appearance of the prescriptions is the result of bent corners from years of use.

**Station J: Loggia, Staircase and Carriageway**
The loggia, defined as an “open-sided extension to a house,” was typical of 19th Century Spanish architecture. The indoor-outdoor space was designed to encourage air circulation throughout the staircase to cool the living quarters on the second and third floors. Creole culture dictated that visitors to the family would enter through the carriageway and ascend the grand back staircase to the living quarters, while people conducting business in the pharmacy would enter through the front door. In the Creole townhouse, the loggia also served as a main entryway to the home that was protected from the elements.