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CityBusiness staff reports

Couple targets high-end visitors for custom tours

There's a new travel service in town for visitors looking for a more customized experience.

Spouses Jennifer and Travis Simpson have launched Bespoke Experiences, a new travel service for visitors willing to spend more money on a private expedition of New Orleans structured around their own personal tastes.

"There is nothing prepackaged," Jennifer Simpson said. "We create custom itineraries based on their unique interests and needs."

The Simpsons talk to clients before they come to New Orleans to get a better idea of what they want to see and experience while in town.

Jennifer Simpson said the service targets visitors — such as business executives, political figures, and local corporate recruitment candidates — willing to spend money to get to know the city beyond the French Quarter.

"Because nothing is scripted, they get a more on-the-ground feel of what the city is like, beyond the regular tourist hot spots," she said.

The couple hopes to target convention visitors as well.

Jennifer Simpson also owns an event planning company, Convene Inc., about an hour west of Toronto where she mainly caters to visitors attending pharmaceutical meetings.

Tours range from hourly to multiple days. A half-day visit costs approximately \$475, however prices vary based on the type of itinerary. Because the visits will showcase unique restaurants, music venues and galleries, a portion of the proceeds will be reinvested back into the city through the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts.

Before launching this service with Jennifer, Travis spent close to 20 years working in sales in New Orleans with hotel brands that include Marriott, Omni and Starwood.