



What's with the umbrellas?



Umbrellas are part of the New Orleans “second line” tradition, which originated in the 19th century when jazz funeral processions wound through the city streets.

The "first line" consisted of the family of the deceased, funeral directors, and a brass band.

The "second line" was made up of those who wanted to honor the dead and celebrate their life.



Before long, second lines were integrated into New Orleans social life and popped up whenever there was a celebration. Nobody knows exactly when parasols became part of the tradition.

Some theorize umbrellas were practical, considering the hot and humid climate in New Orleans.

Others say parasols symbolize southern style and grace.

Either way, today brightly colored umbrellas reflect personal style and a flair for life, one filled with exuberance and joy, much like the tunes performed by the Carolina Jazz Society and the dancer Breedlove in the photo below.

