

# Dirty Rice

by Todd Mouton

## *Cajun sounds from The Netherlands; New from McLain and Frank*

Traveling from Amsterdam and worried about U.S. Customs in Houston? Just tell 'em you're in a Cajun band. It worked for the members of **Des Fais Do-Do**, a Cajun/bluegrass band from The Netherlands that made a pilgrimage to Louisiana during the peak of spring festival season. "It's not planned at all. It's just-how you call it?-immersion," said accordionist **Bert Hek**, describing the musicians' itinerary. The band treads lightly over almost a dozen Cajun tunes on their recently released disc *Mardi blue grass*, and they took in **Festival International de Louisiane**, **The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival** and **The Breaux Bridge Crawfish Festival** during their visit. In addition to stops at landmarks like **Mid-City Lanes' Rock'n'Bowl** and **Master-Trak Studios**, the band got to meet and play with famous Cajun musicians like **Marc Savoy**, **Eddie Lejeune** and **D.L. Menard**. Based in Enschede in the eastern Netherlands, Des Fais Do-Do includes a teacher, a lawyer, an electrical engineer and an environmental researcher. The group began playing Cajun music nearly five years ago because "it is music for fun," said guitarist/vocalist **Henk Leeuwis**. The players learned from books, recordings and the liner notes to a "**Nonc**" **Allie Young** record, expanding their repertoire of acoustic folk and bluegrass numbers like "Do Re Mi" and "Tennessee Blues." "The Cajun scene in their home country is booming, the band members said, and they've got two to three gigs a month scheduled through October. It usually takes their countrymen about a set to figure out how to relate to the Cajun repertoire. "In Holland, when people hear waltzes, they want to start with the wrong foot up," said Leeuwis. The band hooked up with folks in the bayou country via an Internet newsgroup and e-mail, and they'd love to come back next year and play a few gigs. Recounting their experiences here, Hek summed up the band's motto, "Cajun music opens every door."

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