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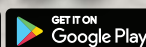
THE OFFICIAL 2022

RVers GUIDE *to Florida*



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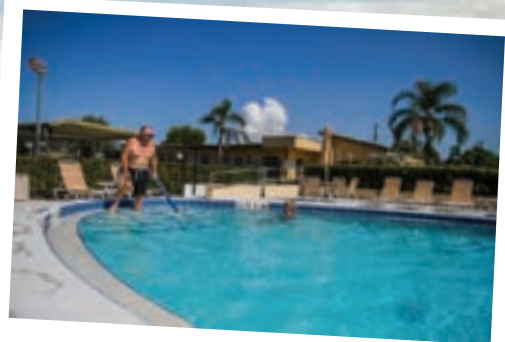
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TAMPA BAY SUMMER RV SHOW

JUNE 9-12

Florida State Fairgrounds

All Dates Subject
to change.

For more
information visit
www.frvta.org/shows

WHY ARE *Florida RV shows* A GREAT PLACE TO SHOP FOR RVs?

Florida RV Trade Association (FRVTA) regional RV Shows make it easy for you to see lots of RVs in one convenient location close to where you live. These shows are held all over Florida bringing many different types and sizes of RVs together so you can compare vehicles side-by-side.

The FRVTA divides the state into seven regions and some of the regions hold more than one show per year. These shows are part of the educational program of the association introducing the general public to the RV lifestyle and explain how easy it is to get involved. Shows are a great place to get all your "RV-ownership" questions answered in a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. With all the new RVs sold in Florida, the state has a great number of quality pre-owned RVs that can also be found in many shows, which is another inexpensive way to get started. Whether you're thinking of a

new or used RV, you can be assured that the best dealers and values can be found when RV dealers are competing side-by-side.

RV shows are also a great place to get those hard-to-find parts and accessories in the supplier booth area. Other products on display include insurance and financing, camping clubs, RV service and supply firms and the best campgrounds and resorts found in Florida. The variety and selection of various products and services makes the supplier booth area a favorite of show visitors. You never know what you'll see.

Florida is home to more RV shows than any other state and that means the opportunities for the public are virtually unlimited. So be sure to visit the FRVTA website (frvta.org) and download our new app to find the nearest RV show. You'll be glad you did.

FLORIDA RV SUPERSHOW - *The BIGGEST and BEST!*

There are many RV shows held all over the country, but the biggest and best is the **Florida RV SuperShow**. Held every January at the Florida State Fairgrounds in Tampa. This show boasts over 1,200 RVs on display from every major RV manufacturer. With over 70,000 attendees, this show has grown every year and continues to get bigger.

Supplier and accessory booths feature everything from financing and insurance to every part and accessory you'll ever need. Whether you're a RV veteran or just getting started, the Florida RV SuperShow is the one show you have to see.

In addition to the largest selection of RVs, the SuperShow features a number of excellent seminars. Bringing in nationally known speakers, the seminars offer something for everyone. "Maps and Apps for RV Trip Planning", "RVing Alaska", "Stress Free Travel - Guided RV Vacations", "Motorhome Maintenance on a Spartan Chassis", "Maintenance for Lippert Components", and "Maintenance and Operation of Onan Generators" are some of the topics covered in the seminar area. All seminars are free with paid admission.

The general public can bring their RV and stay right on the fairgrounds in the Super

Rally. Over 800 RVs enjoy unlimited access to the SuperShow, 4 nights of camping with 30-amp electricity, and coffee and donuts each morning. All clubs and organizations are welcome to participate and will be given free meeting space as well.

The one thing that gets more mentions than anything else is the non-stop, over-the-top entertainment. The free, roaming style entertainers include clowns, jugglers, unicycle riders, music and every day the St. Andrews Bagpipe Band marches through the show. This unique blend of entertainers will keep you laughing and tapping your toes all day long.

Attendees can register for daily door prizes (no purchase necessary). You'll also find a huge selection of not only great "fair" style food but also choices of deli sandwiches and salads as well. As the day rolls on, you'll want to take advantage of the free shuttle service inside the show.

The Florida State Fairgrounds are located at the intersection of I-4 and US Hwy 301 just east of Tampa. For more details about the SuperShow and the Super Rally, visit frvta.org or call the FRVTA State Office at (800) 330-7882. See you there!!

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Quality RV service and repair is in high demand. RV owners young and old are hitting the road with their families. The recreational vehicle of their choice is their means to the next great adventure! One thing is for certain, the RV will need to have service maintenance, wear and tear repairs, an installation of a new manufacturer component(s) or gadgets, at some point during its lifetime.

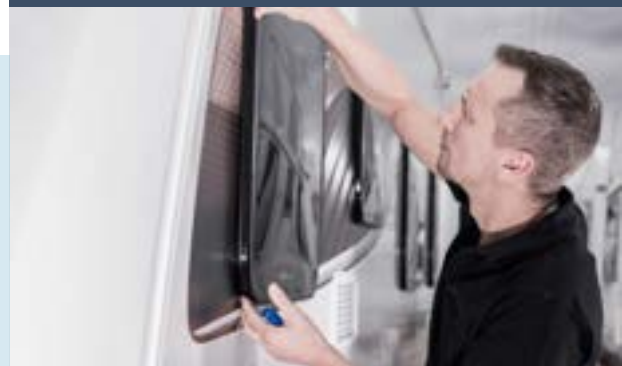
The Florida RV Trade Association (FRVTA) has provided our members with industry technician training for over 20 years. The dealerships, service centers and mobile businesses using the RV Distance Learning Network, have increased their customer satisfaction and improved the service department's repair cycle time.

Our industry trained RV technicians can:

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- ✓ Capable to install hitch and tow equipment based on the manufacturer requirements.
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DRIVING THE RV Industry IN FLORIDA



For 43 years, the Florida RV Trade Association (FRVTA) has been promoting and protecting the general welfare of the recreation vehicle and camping industries.

The Association was established in 1979 and has undergone many changes and today stands as one of the largest and most successful state RV associations in the country.

The FRVTA is a non-profit (501-c 6) organization made up of campgrounds and resorts, RV dealers, finance and insurance company firms, RV manufacturers and service and supplier companies representing thousands of employees. All of these companies work together to ensure that customers receive the finest RV products, services, supplies and accommodations available. All FRVTA activities are coordinated through the state office located in Riverview, FL. The staff includes an Executive Director, Marketing Director, Show Director and support staff.

The FRVTA has divided the state into seven regions, allowing members to participate in local legislative matters and RV shows. This also allows them to meet on a regular basis. In addition, there is an out-of-state category of members that includes just about every major RV manufacturer, the nation's largest campground chains, national camping clubs and a host of service and supply firms and financial companies. The FRVTA communicates with each region to keep members up-to-date on industry events.

Legislative matters are overseen by a full-time legal counsel located in the state capitol of Tallahassee. This ensures that the voice of the RV industry is heard. FRVTA also supports candidates through the FRVPC Political Action Committee Fund.

The FRVTA sponsors a number of regional RV shows and the annual Florida RV SuperShow in Tampa (see page 4). These shows not only allow the public to view a number of various types and sizes of RVs, they are forums for educational seminars and camping clubs. They also provide an introduction to the wonderful world of RV travel. Through these shows and other activities, the FRVTA works closely with the state and tourism organizations to promote RVing and camping in Florida.

So what does the FRVTA mean to you, the RV consumer? FRVTA members agree to a pledge that includes acting in accordance with all state and federal regulations, advertising in an ethical and professional manner and promoting and developing the highest standards of ethical and moral conduct. Also, due to the high volume of new RV sales, FRVTA dealers carry a wide selection and variety of quality used RVs which means your trade-in will be worth more and gives you more units to choose from.

Whether you're shopping at a FRVTA dealership or RV show, or looking for the most modern and well-equipped campground or resort, look for the FRVTA logo to be assured of the finest RV products, services, supplies and accommodations available.

The Florida RV Trade Association (FRVTA) was established in 1979 with one purpose in mind — to promote the general welfare of the recreation vehicle and camping industries throughout the State of Florida.



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FROM THE FRVTA PRESIDENT

As President of the Florida RV Trade Association (FRVTA), it's my pleasure to welcome you to the great State of Florida. The members of the FRVTA are here to make sure your visit with us is fun and trouble-free. Look for the FRVTA logo whether you need a campground, RV dealer, service center, insurance, parts or accessories. Our members offer the highest quality products and are found from one end of our state to the other. So no matter where in the state you may roam, you're not far from one of our members.



You will want to keep this directory close by as you tour our state. We've broken down the state into 7 regions making it easy to find that RV business close to where you are. This is also a great guide to the state. Make sure you read up on the different regions and what unique things each one offers. We're fortunate here in Florida to have so many outdoor options all located near our major cities. Of course our beaches are some of the finest in the world, but there is so much more. Beautiful crystal clear springs flow in just about every region of Florida making kayaking and paddleboarding a very popular activity. Also a nice place to cool off in the hot months. There are scenic bike trails, spectacular golf courses, breath taking sunsets and some of the best salt and freshwater fishing found anywhere.

The FRVTA website (frvta.org) will keep you informed of upcoming RV shows as well as the largest and best RV Show in the country, the Florida RV SuperShow held every January in Tampa. These shows are not only a great place to meet FRVTA members, but you can find those hard-to-find parts and accessories. They also feature just about every RV manufacturer product on the market. With so many people buying new RVs in Florida, we also have a huge selection of quality used RVs as well. Also be sure to download the FRVTA app to help you find our members at your fingertips.

On behalf of all the members of FRVTA, I want to thank you for visiting our state and look forward to making your stay trouble-free and enjoyable.

Get Out There!!

Brian Copley
FRVTA President



COVER PHOTO

A big thanks to Gerzeny's RV World for their help with the photo shoot. Also thanks to our models Patty & Patrick Flanagan and to LB Blanchard Photography.

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RVers GUIDE to Florida



A Membership Directory of the Florida RV Trade Association

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MEET

Roadie!

Hi, I'm Roadie and I'm the mascot of the **Florida RV Trade Association (FRVTA)**. I was selected to be the mascot because of my vast knowledge of the State of Florida and of RVing.

Now you would think a pelican would spend his time on channel markers and sleeping on piers, but not in my case. My father would travel all over Florida in his RV and we always enjoyed all comforts of home. We would visit the sugar-white sandy beaches in the panhandle, the history of the St. Augustine area and enjoy sunsets on Florida's west coast. We are very lucky to have so many campgrounds to choose from here in Florida.

Today I travel all over the state to talk about the fun, freedom and flexibility of RV travel. Be sure to say "Hi" when you see me, and if you need any advice on fishing, I'm your man...er, bird! Enjoy your travels and I'll see you down the road.

RVing in Florida offers an array of activities for the entire family, including outdoor fun, some of the best amusement parks in the United States and a variety of museums. On the following pages, see what Florida RVing has in store for you.

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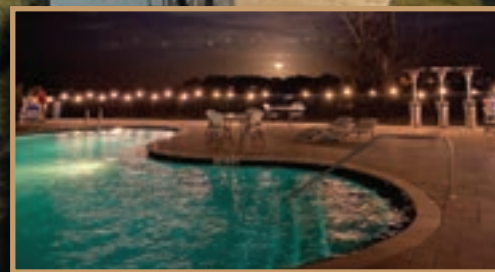
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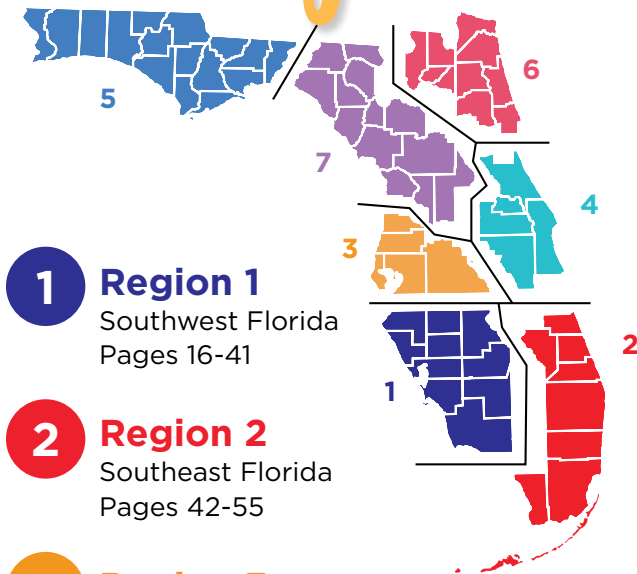
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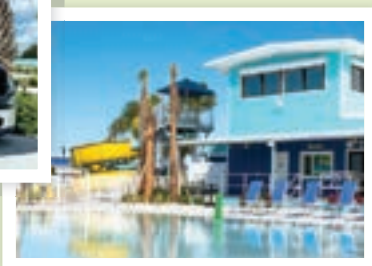
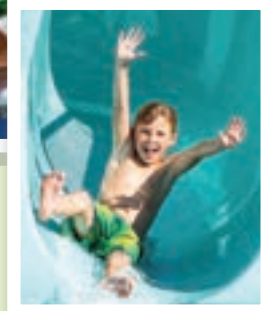
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Stay in Touch WITH FRVTA

It is easier than ever before to keep up with trends in the RV Industry, get travel tips, contact local RV businesses and get all the information you need about statewide RV shows and the largest RV show in the country, the *Florida RV SuperShow*. FRVTA now has a new and improved website, can be liked and followed on a number of Social Media sites and recently launched its new MOBILE APP!

FRVTA launched its new and improved website (frvta.org). The new site makes it easier for the general public to get information about upcoming Regional RV Shows, the *Florida RV SuperShow* and the *Super Rally*. More importantly, the new site will give visitors more information about FRVTA members and an exact location of each member on a map.

New to the FRVTA site is an ongoing blog section. "We are working with a number of bloggers so this section stays new, current and entertaining," said FRVTA Executive Director Dave Kelly. "The new site will also allow us to make additions/corrections at a minutes notice so the information stays up-to-date".

The new site also features a search function to make it easy to find campgrounds, RV dealers and service and supplies nearest to where you are. There is also a regional information page that has loads of information about the 7 FRVTA regions, things to do and see and much more information. We want our site to be

a complete guide to the State of Florida for not just RVers but anyone wanting more information about our state. Visit frvta.org today and get out there and enjoy Florida!

Follow the FRVTA on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Pinterest to get RV Lifestyle, FRVTA RV Resorts & Campgrounds and Destinations, RV Tips, Special Discounts, RV Show Notifications, and to stay in touch with the Florida RV Industry. On our social sites, you can easily ask questions and interact with the FRVTA. We encourage your input on places to see, your favorite restaurants, and those little known spots that you love to visit!

The newly launched mobile app is an RVers dream. Using your location, you will be able to find the closest service center, RV dealership, campground or hard to find parts and accessories. The app also helps you find road service, the closet gas or diesel station, restaurants, shopping, emergency clinics and even weather updates. The app is Apple and Google friendly and can be downloaded from any of the App Stores.



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Top 10 Places to Visit Outdoors in Southwest Florida



Myakka River State Park

1. Just nine miles east of Interstate 75 in Sarasota is the 37,000-acre **Myakka River State Park**, one of Florida's oldest and largest state parks, and a great place to boat, canoe, fish in freshwater, and see authentic Florida wildlife, including alligators. The Myakka River flows through 58 square miles of this diverse natural area, which boasts "wildflower covered prairies, wild wetlands, and gorgeous pinelands."
2. For today's explorers looking for dazzling beaches, **Anna Maria Island** is a barrier island on Florida's Gulf Coast known for its broad beaches, like Manatee Beach Park. Boating, fishing, swimming and shelling are popular pastimes for visitors. In addition, airboat rides offer an up-close look at Gulf marine life. In the small resort city of Anna Maria, Pine Avenue is lined with shops, galleries and eateries. Nearby, the wooden City Pier dates from 1911.
3. A visit to a secluded barrier island will provide an unforgettable Florida adventure. An extensive chain of Gulf barrier islands in the region includes the 230-acre **Don Pedro Island State Park**, located west of Cape Haze on a stretch of Don Pedro Island. An ideal spot for recreation and nature study, it is accessible only by private boat or ferry but worth the trip, as visitors can see West Indian manatees, gopher tortoises, bald eagles and American oystercatchers. Other barrier islands accessible only by boat include Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park, which contains a hard-bottom reef, near North Naples; Mound Key Archaeological State Park, located in Estero Bay near the mouth of the Estero River; and Cayo Costa State Park, an island directly south of Boca Grande and just north of North Captiva Island, approximately 12 miles west of Cape Coral, and accessible only by charter boat, private boat, ferry or helicopter.

Continued on page 22

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THE Ghost Orchid & EVERGLADES TRAIL WEST

The swamps of south Florida are home to many species of orchids, but perhaps none more famous than the ghost orchid. It is believed to have been named the ghost orchid not only because it flowers irregularly in areas difficult to reach, but also because it is hard to see even when it is flowering due to its thin white “legs” and curling tendrils. Yet, surprisingly, this elusive and endangered species is in the news thanks to a trio of researchers who captured remarkable photographic evidence of something not previously known.

Scientists have long established that the ghost orchid, like many orchids, has specific habitat requirements – high humidity, mild temperatures, dappled shade, and the existence of a certain type of fungus. When it comes to studying the orchid’s habits, even Charles Darwin suggested a particular pollinator would be found for each specific orchid. For the ghost orchid, the sole pollinator was believed to be the giant sphinx moth – its tongue and proboscis just the right size to reach the nectar from the flower out of reach for other insects.

But National Geographic photographer and native Floridian Carlton Ward Jr. changed that misconception when his remote camera traps documented five species of moths visiting the ghost orchids that his National



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Continued from page 18

4. Off the Lee County coast, tiny **Sanibel** and **Captiva islands** are among the best known in the region, popular for the hundreds of varieties of shells that can be found on their pristine shorelines. The Sanibel Historical Museum and Village accounts for the island's history, from the Calusa and Spanish eras to the early pioneer families who settled in the 1800s. Nine restored buildings on site include a vintage island residence, 1920s-style general store, post office and tea room.
5. On Sanibel Island is one of the region's most photographed landmarks, the **Sanibel Island Light**, also known as Point Ybel Light, first illuminated in 1884 when the entire island was a wildlife refuge. It was the first lighthouse on Florida's Gulf coast north of Key West and the Dry Tortugas. Although the lighthouse itself is not open to the public, the grounds on the east end of Periwinkle Way surrounding the lighthouse are, and there is a scenic little beach and pier nearby for pictures.
6. In northern Collier County about 30 minutes east of Naples is a prime destination for birdwatchers and naturalists: **Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary**, near Immokalee. Corkscrew is an 11,000-acre wilderness that includes a 2.5-mile boardwalk through pine flatwoods, wet prairie, around a marsh, and into the largest old growth bald cypress forest in North America, offering unique wildlife viewing and nature photography opportunities.



Sanibel Island

7. The southernmost part of the region offers a truly unique experience: a tour of the richly diverse wilderness swamp that is the **Big Cypress National Preserve**. The Big Cypress Swamp's freshwater is essential to the health of the neighboring Everglades and the rich estuaries along Florida's southwest coast. The swamp can easily be experienced by the casual visitor via a boardwalk that winds through the ancient trees. Look for rare ferns, orchids, threatened bromeliads, native birds and swamp creatures. The preserve offers camping and ranger-led programs.



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page 22

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Continued from page 22

**Collier-Seminole State Park**

8. **Collier-Seminole State Park**, a remarkable 7,271-acre wilderness within one of the largest mangrove swamps in the world, offers canoeing, hiking, biking and camping. The park, located on US 41, 17 miles south of Naples, is the home of a National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark, the Bay City Walking Dredge used to build the Tamiami Trail through the Everglades.

9. **Everglades National Park** is the largest remaining subtropical wilderness in the United States. Everglades City, Marco Island's mainland neighbor, is the Gulf Coast entrance to the mysterious and captivating Everglades and where you will find the Gulf Coast Visitor Center. The park, accessible here for tours, provides important habitat for numerous rare and endangered species like the manatee, American crocodile, and the elusive Florida panther. The park's 1.5 million acres protect the southern 20 percent of the original Everglades.
10. Located 5 miles west of Bradenton, the **DeSoto National Memorial** commemorates a historic event that took place nearly 500 years ago. This 27-acre national park marks where Conquistador Hernando DeSoto landed in 1539 and began the first European excursion into what is now the southern United States. His four-year, 4,000-mile "odyssey of intrigue, warfare, disease and discovery" played a key role in the history of the United States. The park offers free ranger-led kayak tours.

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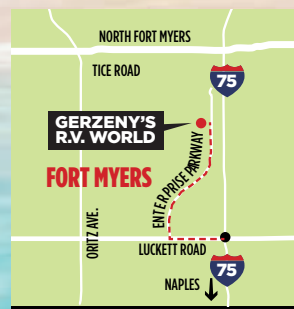
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Geographic team had spotted earlier at the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge. Amazingly, Ward's photos captured two of the moth species, fig sphinx and rustic sphinx, with ghost orchid pollinia on their heads.

Scientists hope this discovery means the rare orchid will have a better chance of survival, given that it does not have to rely, as previously thought, on just one moth for pollination. However, habitat destruction and human development in South Florida have caused hydrologic changes partially responsible for the decline of ghost orchids. Water issues together with over-collecting has had a negative impact on this endangered plant.

The ghost orchid is now protected in many public land areas in South Florida. With continued protection, the ghost and other orchids will continue to inhabit the unique mosaic of ecosystems that is South Florida. Visitors interested in tracking ghost orchids and experiencing other exotic sites in South Florida can use The Everglades Trail, a driving tour of more than 20 national and state parks, conservation areas and wildlife refuges located within the Everglades.

Each site tells the story of water in the Greater Everglades Ecosystem and its contribution to the ecosystem as a whole. Visitors can enjoy nature, observe plant and wildlife habitats, and learn about the restoration efforts underway by numerous government agencies and private conservation organizations.

Since the trail is not a specific route, you may tour for a day, a weekend or longer. Brown highway signs direct you to each site on The Everglades Trail, where you'll find a three-panel kiosk indicating the importance of the exact site to the system, a map of the entire trail, and information about the Everglades. Information and a printable map is available at **www.evergladestail.org** or at **www.visitflorida.com**.

Continued on page 137



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Stretching from Vero Beach south along the Atlantic Ocean to Key West and across the Everglades is Florida's Southeast region. Visitors find plenty of outdoor activities at beautiful beaches, surprising cultural experiences, and unique natural areas, including the largest remaining subtropical wilderness in the United States. A drive to the legendary Florida Keys means experiencing the incredible engineering feat known as The Overseas Highway. The tiny islands – first connected by Henry Flagler's railroad – are pearls on a strand of roadway that dazzles with huge expanses of turquoise water.

Continued on page 44





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Top 10 Places to Visit Outdoors in Southeast Florida



Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge

1. History and nature combine at the nation's first wildlife refuge, located just off the western coast of Orchid Island in the Indian River Lagoon east of Sebastian. **Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge**, a natural stretch of beach and protected wilderness, was discovered to be the last rookery for brown pelicans on the east coast of Florida at a time when plume hunters and egg collectors had exterminated other birds. It was protected in 1903 by President Theodore Roosevelt. This was the first time the federal government preserved land for the sake of wildlife. Today the planks of a boardwalk through the refuge's 5,400-acres of protected water and lands include the names and states of the more than 560 wildlife refuges throughout the nation.
2. **McKee Botanical Garden** in Vero Beach is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and known for its subtropical jungle hammock. A unique new outdoor exhibit opened in 2020 called Grand Central, a sculpture made of willow saplings. The Stickwork installation is the second at McKee Botanical Garden by internationally acclaimed artist Patrick Dougherty. A group of dedicated McKee volunteers joined Patrick and his son Sam for three weeks climbing on scaffolding, weaving, bending, trimming and shaping willow saplings into a one-of-a-kind sculpture made exclusively for McKee. The Garden was founded in 1929 when Waldo Sexton and Arthur G. McKee purchased an 80-acre tropical hammock along the Indian River.

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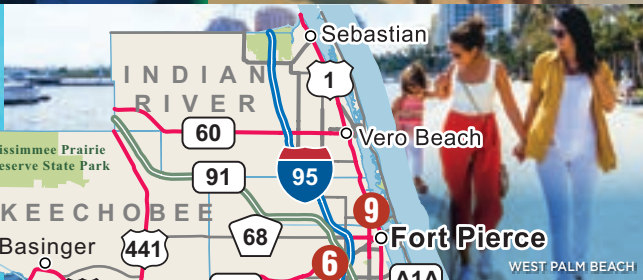
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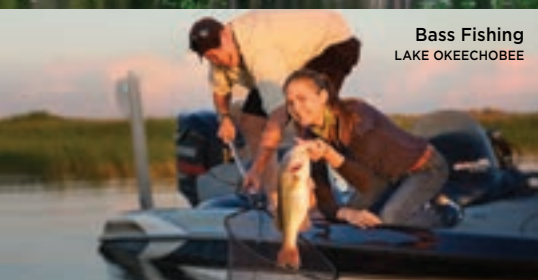
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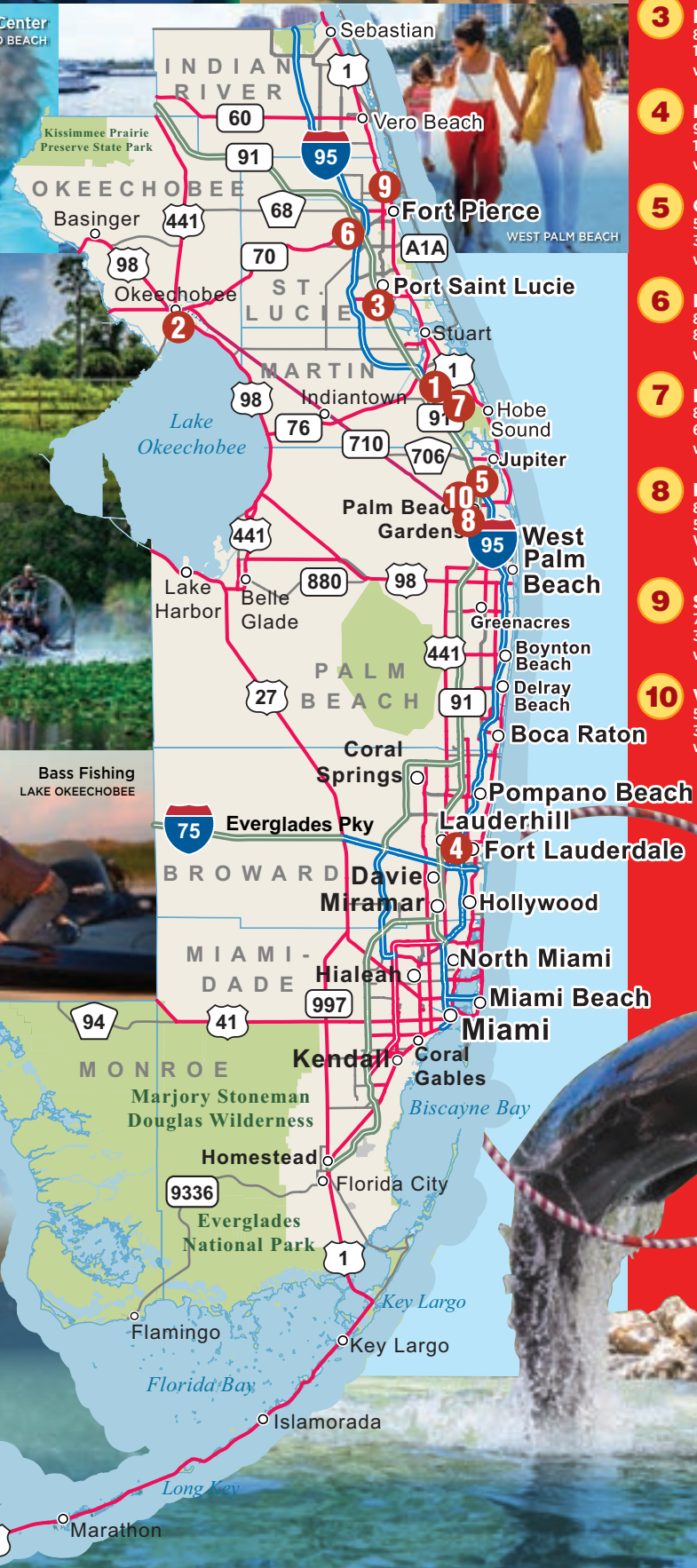
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beginning on
page 49



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If seeing is believing, Floridians can thank the photography and videography of dedicated conservationists over the last 10 years for convincing the powers that be of the need for the Florida Wildlife Corridor. Images of beautiful wild sites in Florida have publicized critical pieces of natural lands necessary to protect in order to link Florida's vast swaths of already protected natural lands. Together these puzzle pieces form connected habitat that is essential for water flow and the survival of many of Florida's endangered species, like the Florida panther, that require room to roam.

The decade of effort to bring these remote beautiful sites into the public eye paid off in June 2021 when the Florida Legislature passed and the governor signed the landmark Florida Wildlife Corridor Act, the first key step in creating a connected corridor across the state of Florida.

The long-sought legislation creates "incentives for conservation and sustainable development while sustaining and conserving the green infrastructure that is the foundation of Florida's



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Continued from page 48

economy and quality of life," according to the Florida Wildlife Corridor Coalition. Not only will it secure access to habitats for wide-ranging wildlife, including the endangered Florida panther, it will prevent fragmentation of critical lands, protect the headwaters of major watersheds such as the Everglades and St. Johns, help to sustain working farms, ranches, and forests, and preserve lands and waters to protect coastal estuaries.

The massive protection undertaking first gained notice in January 2012 when photojournalist Carlton Ward Jr., filmmaker Elam Stoltzfus, bear biologist Joe Guthrie, and conservationist Mallory Lykes Dimmitt launched a 1,000-mile expedition from the Everglades to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge in Georgia to demonstrate the connectivity. The 100-day traverse on foot, mountain bike, paddleboard, kayak and horseback crossed wildlife habitats, watersheds, working farms and ranches.

Backed by conservation partners such as Archbold Biological Station and Audubon Florida, and working with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the expeditionists continued their corridor excursions over the next decade to draw attention to Florida's unique ability to protect lands still undeveloped.

"Though often hidden in plain sight, the Florida Wildlife Corridor is a foundation for nearly every facet of Florida life - from the endangered Florida panther which needs connected habitats to survive, to farmers and ranchers who cultivate the land to feed our country, to 22 million residents and 130 million annual visitors who rely on the services the Corridor provides," said Ward, Jr., a National Geographic photographer and founder of the Path of the Panther project.

"Floridians support a balance between the growth of the economy and preservation of natural resources. This is a moment to celebrate, but also the beginning of a new journey. Florida is finding innovative solutions for conservation to ensure wild Florida exists for future generations," said Jason Lauritsen, executive director, Florida Wildlife Corridor Coalition, of the act's passage.

The state budget also includes significant funding for land conservation within the Florida Wildlife Corridor through the Florida Forever program, which will help protect critical lands for the Florida panther and other species native to Florida.

To learn more, visit floridawildlifecorridor.org, Facebook ([FloridaWildlifeCorridor](https://www.facebook.com/FloridaWildlifeCorridor)), and Instagram ([fl_wildcorridor](https://www.instagram.com/fl_wildcorridor)).

3. Off the Fort Pierce coast, recreational divers can explore **Urca de Lima**, a 1715 Spanish shipwreck opened to the public in the 1980s as the state's first Underwater Archaeological Preserve. It was part of the 1715 Treasure Fleet, one of the numerous Spanish treasure fleets sailing between Spain and her colonies in the Americas, which sank during a hurricane. The shipwreck, part of the U.S. National Park Service, is located 200 yards offshore in 10-15 ft. of water about 1,000 yards north of Pepper Beach Park. A mooring buoy placed at the site is used in lieu of anchoring to protect the shipwreck from anchor damage. A laminated underwater guide is available from local dive shops. The preserve is open to the public year round, free of charge.
4. The 750-acre, state-of-the-art **Zoo Miami**, also known as the Miami-Dade Zoological Park and Gardens, in western Miami-Dade County is the largest and oldest zoological garden in Florida and the only sub-tropical zoo in the continental United States. Established in 1948, it is home to more than 500 animal species and more than 1,000 plant species. The zoo is proud to be an active leader in many global wildlife and environmental conservation initiatives, and is currently involved in over 36 projects on six continents.
5. Tranquil Martin County takes pride in its preservation efforts, and many beaches protect turtle nesting areas, like the **Hobe Sound Nature Center and Wildlife Refuge**, and **The Nature Conservancy's Blowing Rocks Preserve on Jupiter Island**, the site of Florida's largest outcropping of Anastasia limestone. Extreme high tides and storms provide the best opportunities to see surging waves at Blowing Rocks, sending plumes of water up to 50 feet in the air. This peaceful, barrier island sanctuary is a well-known model for large-scale, native coastal habitat restoration. The ecosystems found here are disappearing fast from many Florida islands, and a number of endangered plants and animals call this special place home—including rare loggerhead, green and leatherback sea turtles. Martin County's natural character also can be enjoyed nearby at Jonathan Dickinson State Park in Hobe Sound, where visitors take guided nature tours, canoe on the Loxahatchee River and hike amid a variety of natural habitats: sand pine scrub, pine flatwoods, mangroves, and river swamps.



Blowing Rocks Preserve



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7. A 1919 wedding gift of 35 acres fronting the beach in Ft. Lauderdale is the beginning of the **Bonnet House** story. But today it survives as a museum, gardens, art studio, music studio and wedding venue, providing a place for the public to enjoy beauty and history all in one. A New York Times writer in 1988 described it as, "an unrivaled time capsule neatly preserved from an era earlier in the century when the wealthy elite could afford a cozy 35-acre winter hideaway in Florida." The plantation-style home was built by artist Frederic Clay Bartlett and his wife, Helen Louise Birch, on the land her father acquired in 1895 and gave to the couple as a wedding gift. Helen died tragically in 1925 from breast cancer, and six years later Frederic married Evelyn Fortune Lilly, who spent winters there until 1995. The property was deeded to the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, which maintains it as a nonprofit for public tours and events.

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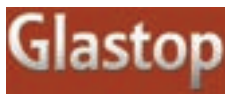
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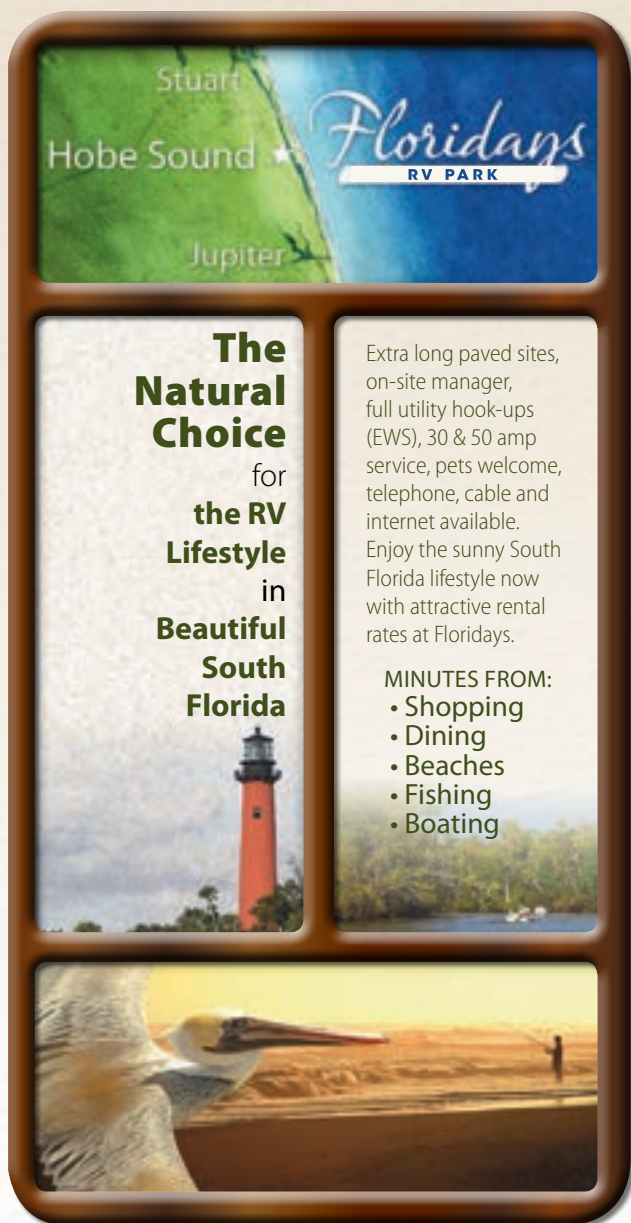
One of the most dramatic bike rides in the United States is the Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail. At 106-miles, this route runs the length of the Florida Keys and is appealing as a destination even though it is not a continuous bike path.

The Trail follows the route of the Overseas Railroad, using some of the railroad's historic bridges, and provides riders with fantastic panoramas of gorgeous emerald and turquoise water. Unique beauty and abundant services along the way make it appealing to all riders.

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John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park



Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park & Lighthouse

Continued from page 52

8. The 83-acre **Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden** in Coral Gables is considered one of the best botanic gardens in the world. Fairchild offers tram and walking tours through extensive collections of rare tropical plants including palms, cycads, flowering trees and vines. The site includes a museum, laboratory, learning center and conservation research facility, and features exhibits, a rare-plant house, rain forest, and sunken gardens.
9. **John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park** in Key Largo is a favorite destination for snorkelers and divers. Established in 1963, it was the first undersea park in the United States. Pennekamp together with the adjacent Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary encompass 178 nautical square miles of coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangrove swamps. Snorkelers and divers have reported seeing 40 varieties of delicate corals and more than 600 species of tropical fish. The park, which extends 3 miles into the Atlantic and is 25 miles in length, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. Snorkeling and scuba tours, and boat and kayak rentals are available.
10. The **Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park and Lighthouse**, the oldest standing structure in Greater Miami, is known for being minutes from Miami and providing stunning Atlantic Ocean views. The Cape Florida Lighthouse, built at the southern tip of Key Biscayne in 1825, has survived nearly 200 years of erosion, dozens of hurricanes, an attack by Seminole Native Americans, and an explosion of lantern oil and gun powder. Climbing the tower's 109 spiral steps provides a legendary view over Key Biscayne including Miami Beach.

Please be sure to go online to check hours of operation, schedules and seasonal closings for the sites mentioned.

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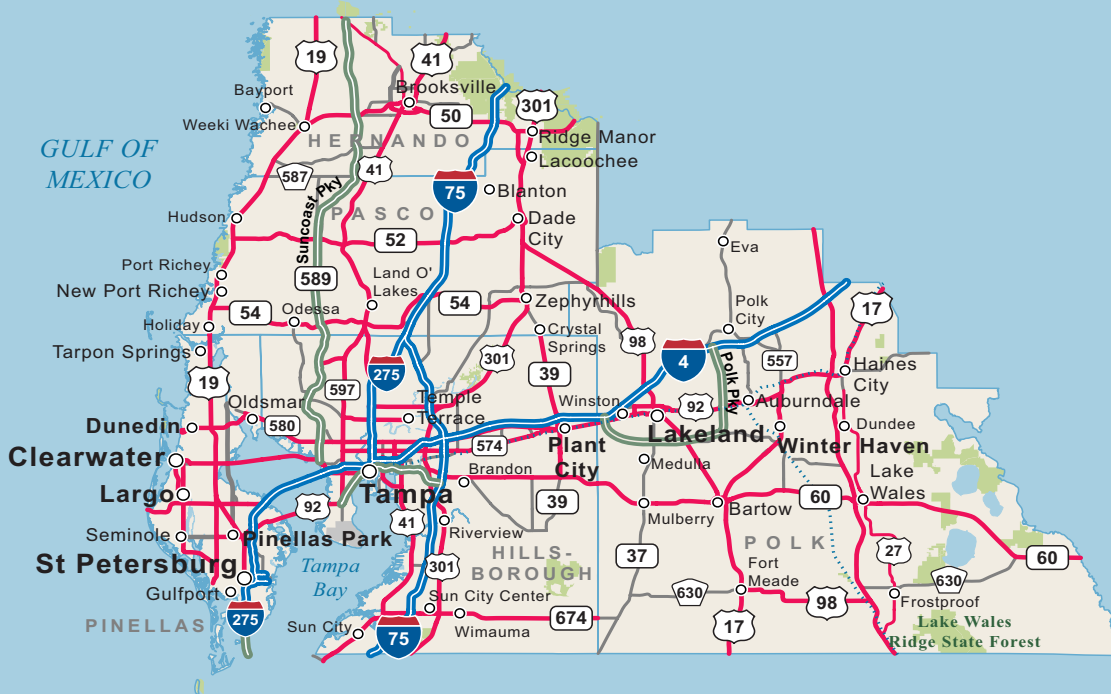


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Continued on page 62



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Photo courtesy of GoRVing.com



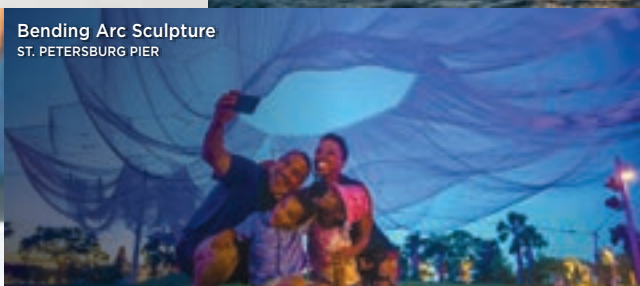
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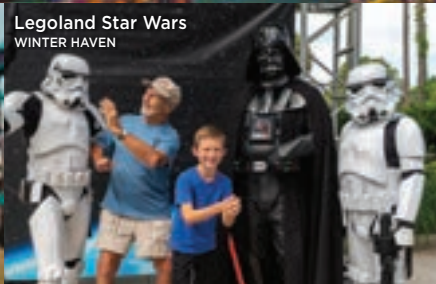
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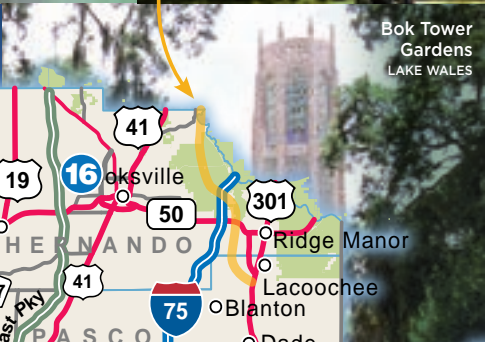
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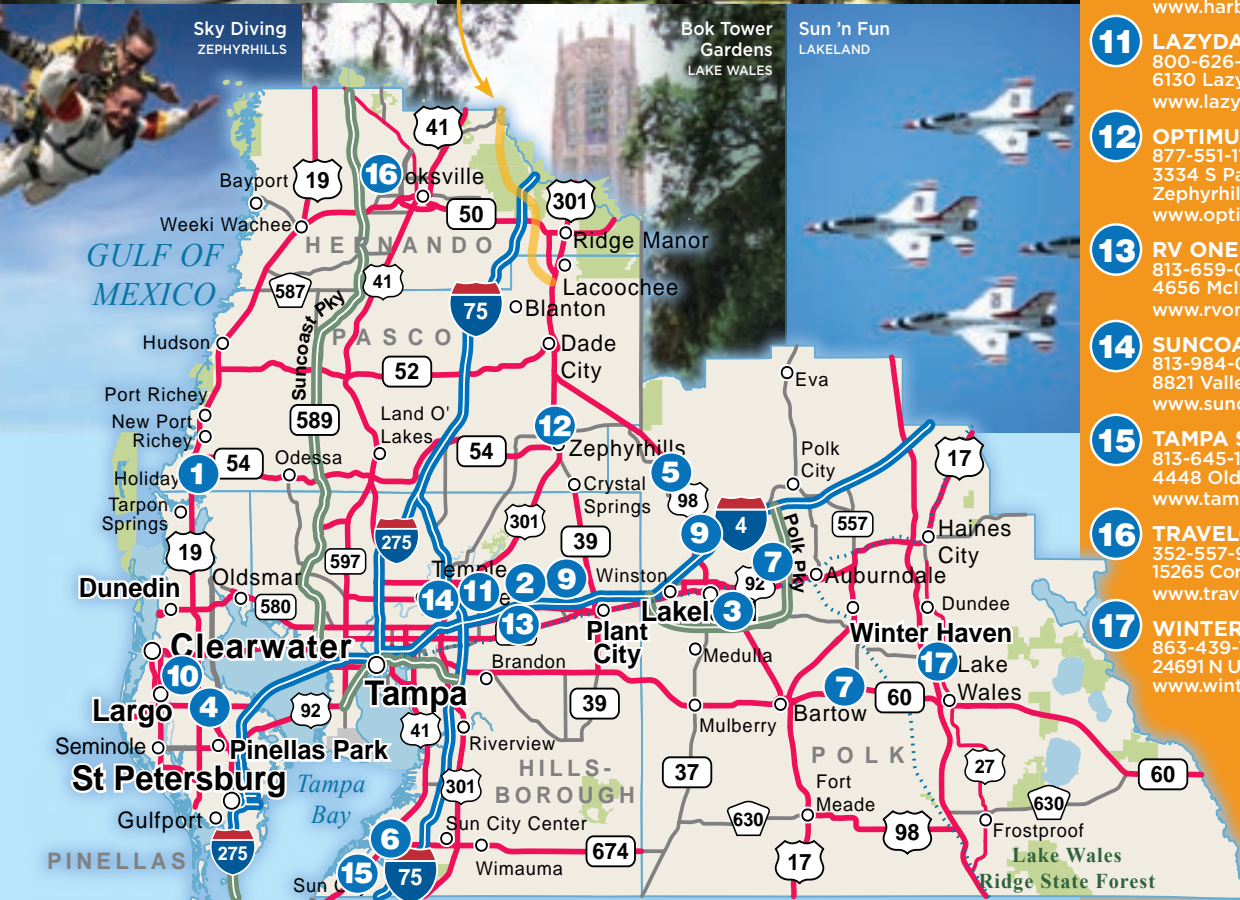
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From St. Petersburg north to Largo, the surroundings are very urban. It's not until you're north of Clearwater that the corridor has a visual buffer of green space around it. Numerous parks serve as trailheads with water and restrooms, however camping is not permitted.

The Pinellas Trail also serves as the westernmost segment of the Florida Coast-to-Coast Trail, a state-spanning route of more than 200 miles.

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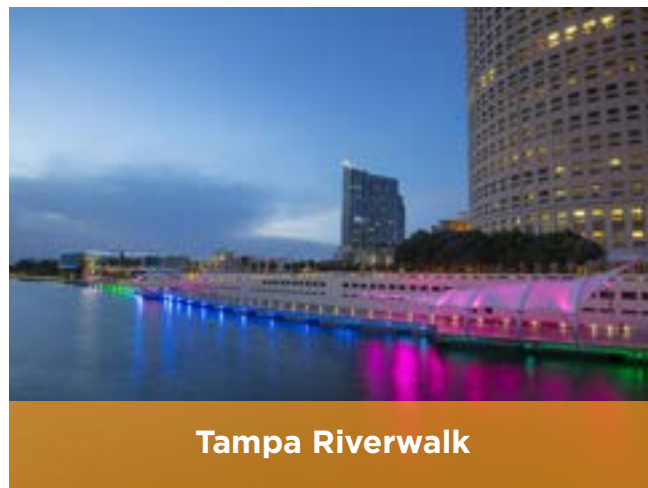


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Top 10 Places to Visit Outdoors in West Central Florida



Tampa Riverwalk

1. There is nothing better for visitors to Tampa looking for fresh air than a stroll along the **Riverwalk**, a continuous pedestrian walkway from the Channel District to Tampa Heights along the east side of the Hillsborough River. The Riverwalk connects Tampa's dynamic cultural venues and incorporates interpretive elements, parks, retail and restaurants. Busts of prominent Tampa citizens continue to be added along the Riverwalk route.
2. An exciting way to explore the Hillsborough River and the Riverwalk is the **Pirate Water Taxi** providing access to attractions, museums, restaurants and parks. Passengers buy tickets at the taxi's home dock (Stop #7 - Convention Center), online or after boarding the taxi at any of the 14 stops located throughout downtown. Once purchased, a wristband allows passengers to hop on and off the taxi at any stop for unlimited rides all day. Regular stops are available on both sides of the Hillsborough River, beginning as far north as Rick's on the River, and continuing through to Bayshore Blvd., Davis Islands, Harbour Island, and Channelside.
3. **Busch Gardens Tampa Bay**, just off Interstate 75, features rides and roller coasters, world-class shows, animal experiences, events, safaris and tours. The park's 335 acres provide one of the country's premier zoos with more than 2,700 animals, nine African-themed areas, plus live shows. Its collection of roller coasters and thrill rides is growing to 10 with the debut of Iron Gwazi, the tallest and fastest hybrid coaster in Florida. Riders travel 206 feet above the ground, endure a 91-degree drop, and reach speeds of 76 m.p.h. Across the street from Busch Gardens is Adventure Island, Tampa's premier water



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Continued from page 62

park, which features 30 acres of slides, tube rides, a huge ocean wave pool, and paradise lagoon. Rounding out the park's offerings are a championship volleyball complex, game arcade and outdoor cafes.

4. **The St. Petersburg Pier** has been a signature icon for downtown St. Petersburg since the late 1800s, yet the past can't hold a candle to the revitalized Pier reopened in 2020, after the old pier was demolished in 2016. The all-new St. Pete Pier includes a new Pier Park, with multi-level observation platforms, floating docks for fishing, and a dedicated space for live events, music, full access to a beach, and a magical playground for kids. Enjoy a variety of food, shops and outdoor restaurants, pop-up festivals, and local vendors. A popular spot is the Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center. Access the city's downtown trolley service, The Looper, to visit the Pier and St. Petersburg art galleries and antique shops.

5. Winter Haven was first homesteaded in the 1860s and gained international attention with the opening in 1936 of the water ski shows and horticultural displays of Cypress Gardens. Today the site is **LEGOLAND** Florida Resort, which includes a theme park and water park. Opened in 2011, LEGOLAND preserved the beautiful gardens in its 145-acre layout and offers more than 50 attractions over 14 distinct lands, including multiple



St. Petersburg Pier

roller coasters and a water slide to fit its amazing collection of giant Lego figures. Lego Movie World is based on the company's movie franchise and offers rides, character meet-and-greets, and a giant playground for kids. The Great LEGO Race is a virtual reality-enhanced coaster designed just for kids. There is even an onsite LEGOLAND Water Park, which includes a wave pool, lazy river and tube slides.

Continued on page 68



Buccaneer Bay



Weeki Wachee Springs State Park

Continued from page 67

6. **Bok Tower Gardens'** historic gardens, a more than 205-foot high neo-Gothic and Art Deco Singing Tower, and Mediterranean-style mansion have provided millions of visitors cultural, artistic and spiritual enrichment since 1929. This remarkable Lake Wales site located about an hour from both Tampa and Orlando has earned recognition as a National Historic Landmark. The beautifully landscaped gardens are one of the greatest works of famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. The nearly 50 acres are home to more than 126 different species of birds, and surround the historic Pinewood Estate. A children's garden includes three acres of nature play to teach the vital connection between animals, plants and people.
7. **Fort DeSoto Park**, the largest park in Pinellas County at 1,136 acres, is made up of five interconnected islands and is home to more than 320 species of birds documented over the last 60 years. It rates among the top 10 U.S. beaches and offers visitors a peaceful refuge. More than a beautiful beach and great place to camp, it includes a historic fort and museum.
8. The talented mermaids of **Weeki Wachee Springs State Park** have captivated crowds since 1947. The nearly 1,000-acre park in Hernando County features a first magnitude spring and a 400-seat submerged theater for watching live mermaid shows. The park offers a wilderness river boat cruise, wildlife, exotic bird show and petting zoo. Buccaneer Bay waterpark located inside the state park features four water slides, three of which drop you into the natural spring. Visitors also can canoe and kayak on the Weeki Wachee River.

Continued on page 69

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Clearwater Marine Aquarium

Continued from page 68

9. Visit the **Clearwater Marine Aquarium** to get a fish-eye view of mangroves and seagrass, critical nursery habitat for juvenile fish, and watch live web cams. The nonprofit's mission is to Rescue, Rehab and Release, and staff provides effective care to sick or injured animals, with the goal of returning them to their homes. A new manatee rehabilitation center is being built to help with the influx of manatees in critical need. For over a decade, Clearwater Marine Aquarium has assisted in rescuing, releasing, and tracking wild manatees around the world.

10. **Sunken Gardens** is a botanical paradise in the midst of bustling St. Petersburg that includes an interactive children's museum. As St. Petersburg's oldest living museum, the 100-year-old Sunken Gardens is home to some of the oldest tropical plants in the region. Visitors stroll along meandering paths, lush with exotic plants from around the world, through cascading waterfalls, beautiful demonstration gardens, and more than 50,000 tropical plants and flowers.

Please be sure to go online to check hours of operation, schedules and seasonal closings for the sites mentioned.



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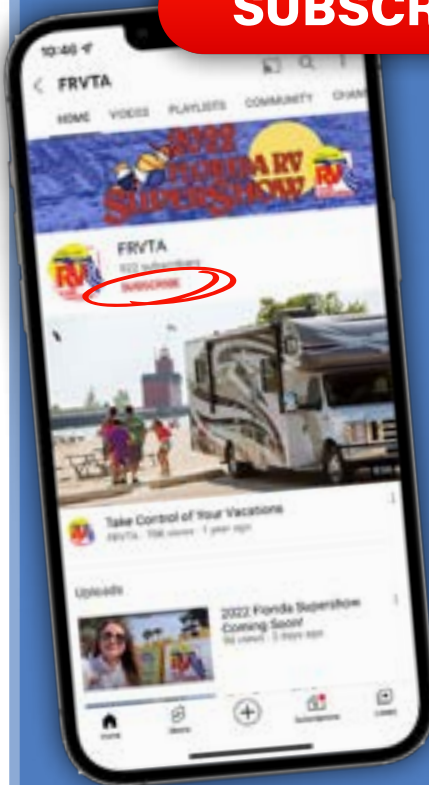
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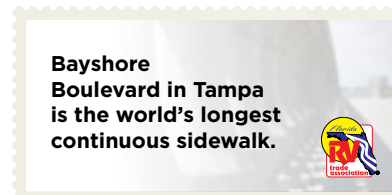
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Spring TRAINING

With 15 Major League Baseball teams calling Florida home for spring training, fans can easily start the season off right by watching their favorite team at both home and away games. Many of the ballparks are within driving distance of each other adding to the adventure of exploring new venues, learning more history of the game, and seeing players in a relaxed, accessible atmosphere.

Spring Training in the Grapefruit League, a baseball tradition since the 1890s, means beautiful ballparks located near some of Florida's most beautiful beaches, offering fans plenty of options. MLB's other 15 teams warm up for the season in Arizona in the Cactus League. All teams begin practice in late February and games are scheduled throughout March.

To assist in planning a Spring Training tour, you'll find a little more about each venue below, in alphabetical order by location. Many of these facilities host minor league teams during the regular baseball season, so your professional baseball experience doesn't have to be limited to March.

Continued on page 142

MLB teams calling Florida their Spring Training home are:

- 1 Atlanta Braves, North Port
- 2 Baltimore Orioles, Sarasota
- 3 Boston Red Sox, Ft. Myers
- 4 Detroit Tigers, Lakeland
- 5 Houston Astros, West Palm Beach
- 6 Miami Marlins, Jupiter
- 7 Minnesota Twins, Ft. Myers
- 8 New York Mets, Port St. Lucie
- 9 New York Yankees, Tampa
- 10 Philadelphia Phillies, Clearwater
- 11 Pittsburgh Pirates, Bradenton
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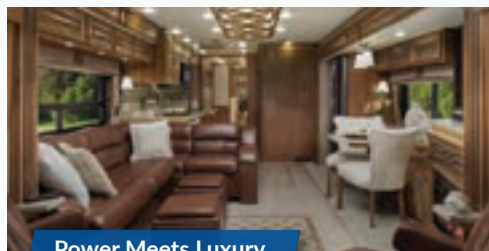
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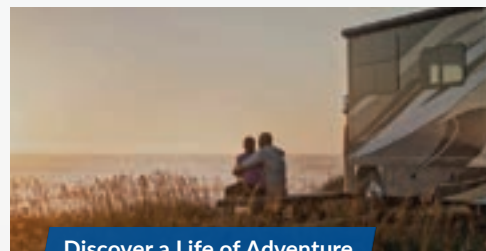
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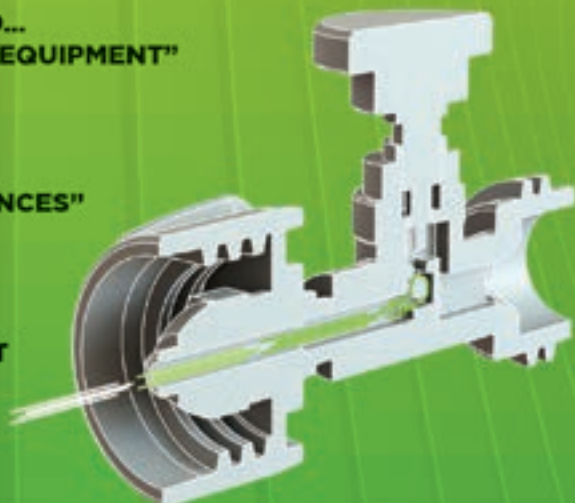
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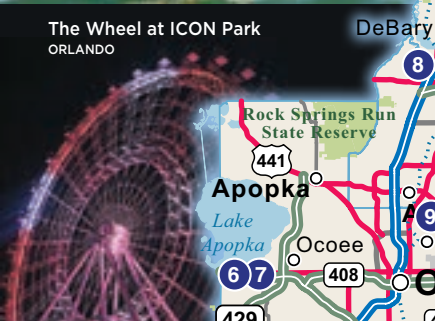
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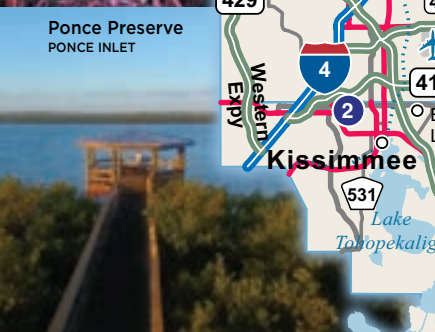
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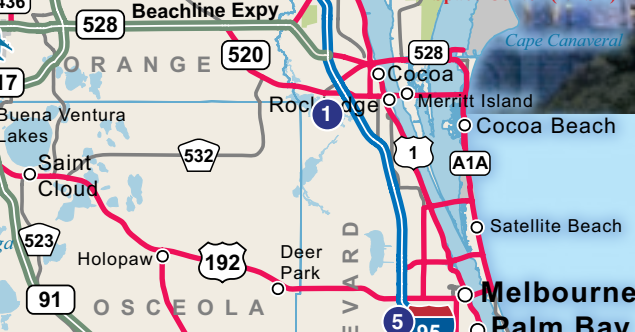
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The Kennedy Space Center is an active space center. It still launches rockets!

Top 10 Places to Visit Outdoors in East Central Florida



Walt Disney World Resort

1. **SeaWorld Orlando** is a wonderful place to be entertained with rides, interactive experiences and parades while learning more about whales, dolphins, sea lions and other marine creatures. SeaWorld boasts the roller coasters Mako, which stands 200 feet high and sends thrill seekers flying at 73 mph, and Kraken, which reaches a speed of 65 mph before turning upside down seven times. The park also includes Discovery Cove by SeaWorld, a tropical park where guests can swim and interact with dolphins, tropical fish, sharks and stingrays. SeaWorld's Aquatica Orlando water park includes raft rides such as Karekare Curl and Ray Rush. Aquatica has been designated as a Certified Autism Center — the first water park in the world to receive such a distinction, by enhancing the guest experience for families with special needs.
2. **Walt Disney World Resort** includes four theme parks – EPCOT, Magic Kingdom, Animal Kingdom, Hollywood Studios – one water park, Blizzard Beach – the entertainment complexes Disney Springs and the Boardwalk, and numerous hotels, outdoor restaurants and other offerings. Visitors are drawn to Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge, a 14-acre land, located in Hollywood Studios. The large wildlife park Animal Kingdom offers animal encounters, thrill rides, safaris and shows. Of course, a must-see in the Magic Kingdom is Cinderella Castle, surrounded by favorites such as Splash Mountain and Haunted Mansion. Disney Springs includes world-class dining, serious shopping, and children's play areas. EPCOT's annual food, wine and garden festivals draw visitors from around the world who stroll around the lake sampling international recipes and drinks.

Continued on page 85

3. **Universal Orlando Resort** complex includes three themed hotels, two theme parks – Universal Studios Florida and Universal Islands of Adventure – the water park Volcano Bay, plus CityWalk, a 30-acre shopping, dining and entertainment area. The theme parks combine technology with beloved characters on more than 25 rides, including the Transformers: The Ride-3D, the Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man, Despicable Me Minion Mayhem and Harry Potter and the Escape from Gringotts. Each theme park includes a Wizarding World of Harry Potter, with Diagon Alley in Universal Studios and Hogsmeade in Islands of Adventure, drawing visitors from around the globe. Islands of Adventure visitors are drawn to Hagrid's Magical Creatures Motorbike Adventure, a thrilling motorcycle and side car ride near Hogsmeade and Hagrid's Hut. Adjacent to the Universal complex is the water park Volcano Bay centered by a 200-foot-high volcano gushing water called Krakatau, part of a Pacific-inspired land of river raft rides, water slides, beaches, and wave pool.

4. **Gatorland**, a favorite “real Florida” attraction in Kissimmee for decades, offers a variety of guest adventures including the Gator Night Shine tour. The Screamin' Gator Zipline sends visitors flying over 1,200 feet from towers standing seven stories high, and the Gator Gauntlet Zipline takes visitors over the Alligator Breeding Marsh.



Gatorland

5. **The Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse**, located about 10 miles south of Daytona, is a 175-foot-tall tower, the tallest lighthouse tower in Florida and the second tallest in the United States. This National Historic Landmark was completed in 1887. A 203-step climb brings you to the lighthouse's gallery and an unparalleled view of the Atlantic coast. The Ponce Inlet Light Station and Museum hosts visitors and school groups to learn about the more than 500 years since Spanish explorer Juan Ponce De Leon first encountered Florida in 1513.

Continued on page 87

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The West Orange Trail that winds through urban and suburban sections of Orange County is often referred to as Winter Garden's Renaissance Bike Trail because of what it has meant to the city of Winter Garden.

The asphalt trail runs from west of Oakland at the Killarney Station trailhead on SR50 through Winter Garden to Apopka, ending at Welch Road. A spur at Killarney Station connects to the South Lake Trail. Outposts and stations along the trail provide parking and facilities.

The West Orange Trail is part of the Florida Coast-to-Coast Trail, a state-spanning route of more than 200 miles.

Florida has the third-largest population of any state. Nearly 1000 people move to Florida every day.





6. Just a bit north of Orlando in Seminole County is where the Wekiva River flows through the shade of a semi-tropical forest. **Wekiwa Springs State Park**, located at the headwaters of the river, provides for horseback riding, fishing, bird watching and nature hiking on 13 miles of trails. A canoe trip is the best way to experience the river, and several canoe outfitters operate nearby.

7. One of the most beautiful natural areas in Florida is found just north of the **Kennedy Space Center** at Canaveral National Seashore and the 140,000-acre Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. The seashore is undeveloped except for several wooden boardwalks over the natural dunes from the parking areas. The refuge, an overlay of the space center, was established in 1963 as a buffer zone for rocket launches. The coastal site is a major wintering area for migratory birds, and currently lists 20 species as state or federally threatened or endangered.

8. Nearby **Blue Spring State Park** in Orange City is a favorite place to see manatees in the winter and swim in cool, clear water in the summer. The park stays open late in April for visitors to experience "Mother Nature's Light Show," when thousands of fireflies light up the woods. Nearby Lake Woodruff National Wildlife Refuge provides hiking through more than 5,000 acres of habitat for migrating and wintering birds. The refuge contains 21,574 acres of freshwater marshes.

DeLeon Springs State Park

9. Escape to the relaxing sands of **New Smyrna Beach**, 13 miles of pristine beach popular for families with small children. The town's gentle charm, historic architecture and water views have earned it praise as "Old Florida." When the sun sets, New Smyrna Beach offers quaint restaurants and a variety of theatrical and musical performances. Events are often held at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, which draws aspiring artists in many disciplines from across the country. The Center is a nonprofit interdisciplinary artists' community featuring community programming and residencies led by distinguished contemporary artists.

10. **DeLeon Springs State Park** is a historic site, a refreshing place to swim, a subtropical forest for hiking, and a place to indulge in one of the most memorable breakfasts ever. Located in DeLeon Springs, the park includes a natural spring of 72-degree crystal clear water, where depths range from 18 inches to 30 feet at the spring boil. Past Native American inhabitants left shell middens and historical buildings. The spring run was once used to turn a sugar cane mill followed by a grist mill to turn corn into flour during the Civil War. The Sugar Mill Restaurant today offers a fun menu that includes pancakes cooked on table grills with your choice of additions.

Please be sure to go online to check hours of operation, schedules and seasonal closings for the sites mentioned.

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KING'S *Landing*

NATURE'S THEME PARK

Nature lovers who spend time in Orlando undoubtedly know about the area's hidden gems – the Wekiva River and Wekiwa Springs. Not so clear to visitors is why one is spelled Wekiva with a “v” and one is Wekiwa with a “w.” Don't be confused – just know the Wekiva River Basin is a designated National Wild and Scenic River and a visit to King's Landing is a delightful way to spend a day outdoors in Central Florida.

Wekiwa is a Seminole-Creek Indian word for a spring of water, and it's believed that local developers accidentally changed the spelling of the river over the years. There are efforts underway by local governments to standardize signage to help visitors to the area's state parks. We suggest simply finding your way to King's Landing in Apopka for a day on Rock Springs Run, the pristine waters that feed the Wekiva River Basin.

King's Landing, known as Nature's Theme Park, offers a variety of activities, from self-guided paddles to guided tours under the stars. The amazing emerald colored spring water meanders across sandy bottoms and through lush greenery.

The Day Paddle is a self-guided tour in your own vessel or in a rental. Paddlers leave the King's Landing launch and once they exit the canal can explore a mile in either direction.

Continued on page 126



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Northwest Florida



It's easy to spend time in Florida's Panhandle

Region 5 offers visitors a multitude of outdoor activities, including boating, diving, world-renowned fishing, or simply sun bathing on gorgeous beaches.

Photo courtesy of GoRVing.com



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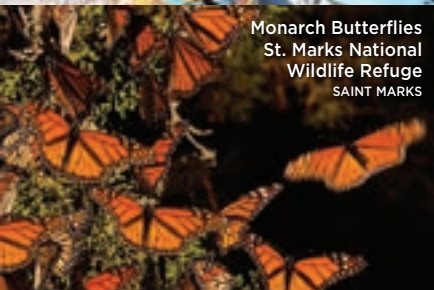
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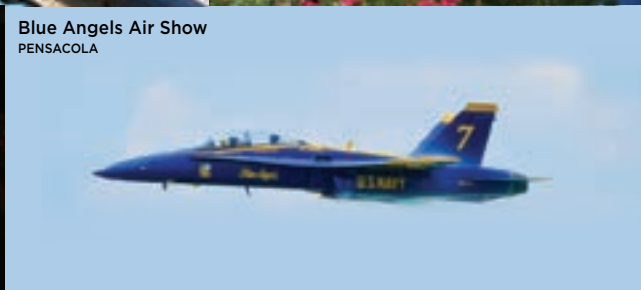
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Top 10 Places to Visit Outdoors in Northwest Florida



Torrey State Park

1. High bluffs overlooking the Apalachicola River make Torrey State Park, 13 miles north of Bristol, one of Florida's most scenic places. Developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, Torrey is popular for camping, hiking and picnicking. Bird-watching is also a popular activity. Over 100 species of birds have been spotted in the park. The park, named for an extremely rare species of Torrey tree that grows only on the bluffs along the Apalachicola River, preserves unique plant and animal species and natural communities that are of regional importance, and protecting the water quality of the Apalachicola River, which feeds the productive Apalachicola Bay.
2. The Pensacola Lighthouse and Maritime Museum in the western Panhandle dates back to 1859 when the tower was first lighted on New Year's Day. Today, the Pensacola Lighthouse at 150 feet tall rewards visitors who climb 177 steps to the top with a great place to watch the Blue Angels practice from Naval Air Station Pensacola. The black and white tower also provides beautiful views of the Gulf of Mexico. The keeper's house built in 1869 provides display rooms for historic artifacts and maritime descriptions of the past. A claim that the lighthouse is haunted once brought camera crews from the TV show Ghost Hunters. As the lighthouse is located on Naval Air Station Pensacola, access is limited, so please check the Pensacola Lighthouse website for visitor information.
3. Perdido Key, located on a thin strip of land, and its Perdido Key State Park offer rolling, white sand dunes and stunning views of the often calm Gulf waters. Perdido Key State Park is open for day use from 8 a.m. to sunset and offers two parking areas and eight covered pavilions, perfect for a picnic lunch while enjoying the gentle breezes off the Gulf.

Continued on page 98

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Continued from page 96

The 704-acre Big Lagoon State Park, which separates the mainland from Perdido Key and the Gulf of Mexico, is available for camping and hiking.

4. Santa Rosa's Gulf Breeze Zoo is home to more than 900 animals from around the world roaming over 50 acres. Visitors rave about this small zoo, perfect for an afternoon visit, and its support of wildlife conservation through public education, captive breeding programs, habitat preservation, and financial aid for projects in the wild.
5. Blackwater River State Park, located within the Blackwater River State Forest, includes miles of trails that wind through secluded forests and along creeks lined with dogwood trees. Nearby Milton, dubbed the "Canoe Capital of Florida," welcomes visitors to canoe, kayak and tube along the crystal-clear, spring-fed waters of the Blackwater River. Despite its name — Blackwater, or the original Oka-lusa (water black) in the Muscogee language — the Blackwater River is normally a transparent golden-brown when seen against the white sandbars.
6. Panama City's 27 miles of white sand beaches and variety of entertainment offerings continue to make the city a family favorite. In Panama City Beach, there's Shipwreck Island Waterpark, a 20-acre tropical landscape filled with waterslides, a lazy river, rapids, tube rides and a wave pool. Gulf World Marine Park features shark feedings, dolphin encounters, and sea lion, parrot and dolphin shows. ZooWorld Zoological and Botanical Conservatory in Panama City Beach is a zoo focusing on conservation with more than 350 animals, programs and shows in a tropical setting.

Continued on page 99



Gulf Breeze Zoo



Blackwater River State Park



Panama City



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7. For a bird-watchers' haven, don't miss the undeveloped barrier island of St. Vincent, just offshore from the mouth of the Apalachicola River, and the St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge. Off-the-beaten-path destinations nearby also include the fishing community of Port St. Joe with its summertime scalloping, and Apalachicola, famous for its oysters. Water shuttles are available near Port St. Joe to the barrier islands.
8. Three Rivers State Park in Jackson County near the border with Georgia is named for the Chattahoochee, Flint and Apalachicola rivers. The Chattahoochee and Flint combine to form Lake Seminole above the Jim Woodruff Dam. Below the dam, the water forms the mighty Apalachicola River which flows to Apalachicola Bay and the Gulf. The 682-acre park, which has two miles of shoreline on Lake Seminole at the Florida-Georgia border, includes a 100-foot pier for fishing. Overnight visitors can stay in a full-facility (no sewer hook-up, dump station only) campground next to the lake or enjoy a modern cabin.
9. The Cape St. George Light on St. George Island was reopened to the public in 2008, reconstructed following the collapse into the Gulf of Mexico of the previous structure in 2005. Visitors to the lighthouse, originally built in 1833 and rebuilt in 1848 and 1852 on what is now Little St. George Island, climb 92 stairs to the top.

The reconstruction was a labor of love by the St. George Lighthouse Association, as volunteers cleaned the mortar off thousands of the old bricks and used as much of the original materials as possible to rebuild according to the original plans obtained from the National Archives. A replica of the original keeper's house next to the tower opened in 2011 houses a museum and gift shop.

10. The Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park, a 6,000-acre wildlife sanctuary, offers hiking, biking or a river boat tour along the Wakulla River and one of the world's deepest and largest freshwater springs. The Lodge at Wakulla Springs south of Tallahassee is a historic, elegant hotel built in 1937 surrounded by pristine forest. Both are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Please be sure to go online to check hours of operation, schedules and seasonal closings for the sites mentioned.



St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge



Cape St. George Light



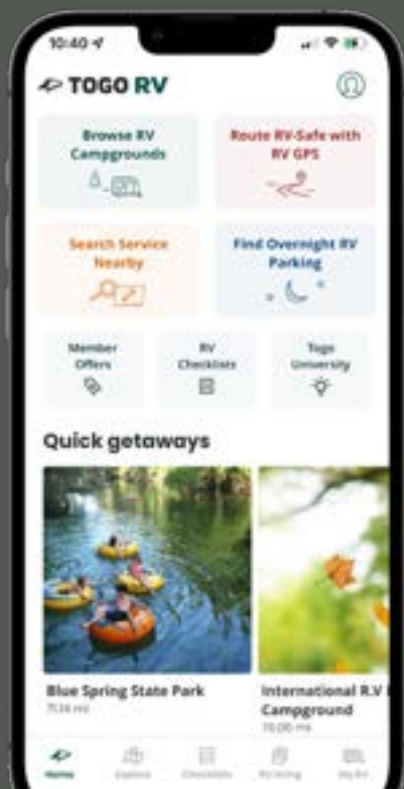
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THE Best Apps

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Ready to plan your dream RV trip, but not sure where to find places to stay? Wondering if you can safely fit under overpasses on a scenic byway? Navigating a safe RV route is a bit more involved than a typical car road trip, but there are plenty of apps to help you along the way. Here, we cover the best RV GPS and overnight stay apps to make planning your next RV trip easy.

TIPS ON PLANNING A SAFE RV ROUTE

Where do you park an RV when traveling?

For quick stops, look for truck parking at gas stations, rest stops, and travel plazas to make sure you have enough room to maneuver. For overnight stays, use one of the apps listed below to find places to park.

What is the best RV navigation app?

The best RV navigation app is one where you can enter your RV's length, height, and weight and it will show you a safe route to take to your destination. From there, personal preference will determine which app you find easiest to navigate and use.



How do you find RV-friendly roads?

Make sure you use an RV-specific GPS app and don't rely on GPS directions for cars. Check out the list below for some great options on apps that will show you RV-friendly roads.

Where can you sleep in your RV overnight?

There are many places where you can sleep in your RV overnight, including RV parks and campgrounds, free camping on BLM land, and in certain business parking lots. Check out any of the apps below to find the best places to park your RV overnight.

Best Apps continued on page 109

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No permits are required to hike in Blackwater River State Forest. However, a fee will apply to leave a car inside the gates of the Blackwater River State Park, the recommended place to park during a backpacking trip. Check at the ranger station for fees.

The Blackwater Trail is part of the Florida Trail, and an official connector with the Alabama Hiking Trail and the greater Eastern Continental Trail.



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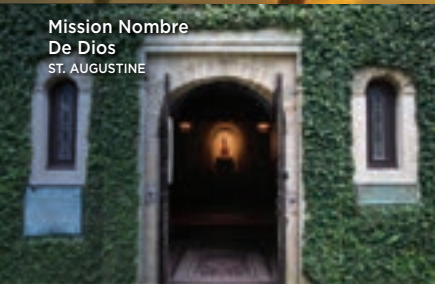
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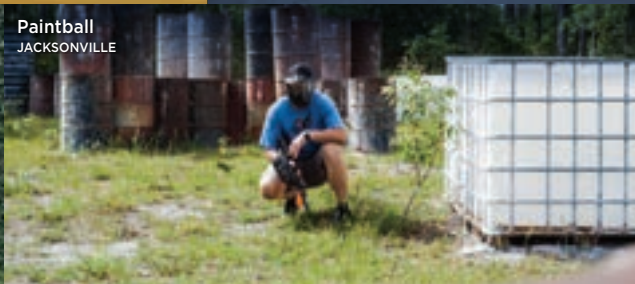
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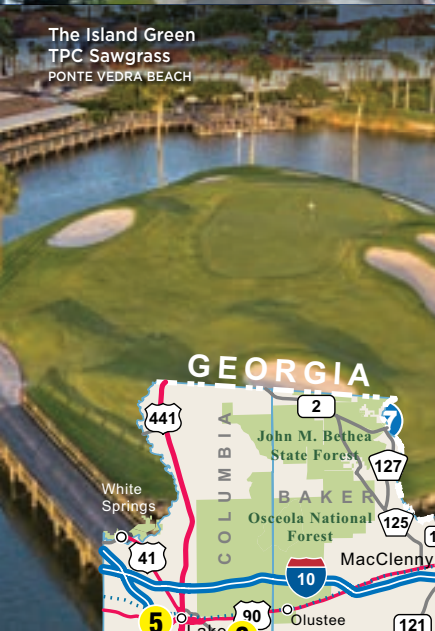
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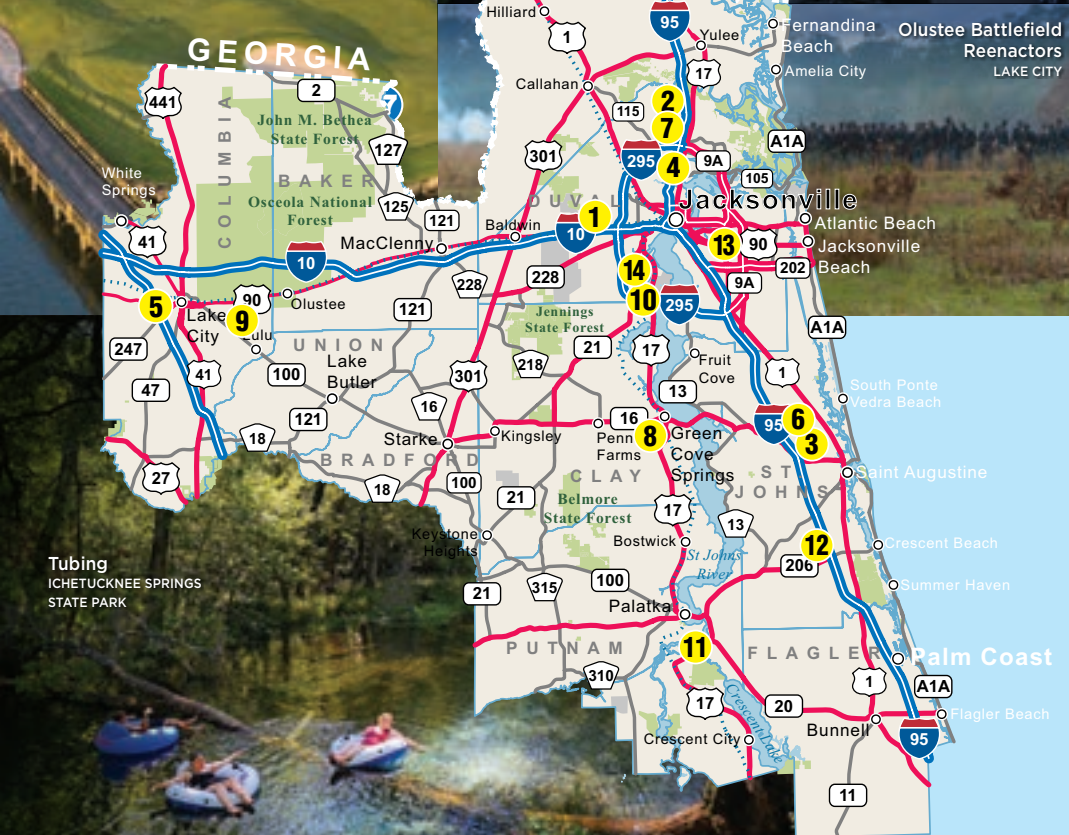
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Continued from page 102

Top 10 Places to Visit Outdoors in Northeast Florida

**Ravine Gardens State Park**

1. A local highlight in Palatka is **Ravine Gardens State Park**, created by water flowing thousands of years from the sandy ridges on the shore of the St. Johns River. It was transformed in 1933 into a dramatic garden by the federal Works Progress Administration. Much of the original landscaping still exists as formal gardens and an extensive trail system. Peak flowering period is azalea season, January to March. The 152-acre park is one of nine New Deal Era state parks in Florida.
2. **Welaka State Forest** on the eastern bank of the St. Johns River 17 miles south of Palatka offers birding through exploration of a mosaic of ecosystems, including wetlands, sandhills and bayheads, plus 4 miles of river frontage along the east bank of Little Lake George on the St. Johns River. In addition to 12.7 miles of trails, the 2,287-acre forest includes an equestrian facility and training center.
3. **St. Augustine**, the nation's oldest continuously occupied European-established settlement and port in the continental United States, allows visitors to escape to the past. Founded in 1565, 42 years before the English colonized Jamestown, St. Augustine has diligently preserved much of its rich heritage in the downtown historic district. Tour by horse-drawn carriage (something visitors have done since 1877), trolley, or on foot armed with tour maps. Visit the 17th-century fort, Castillo de San Marcos, the reconstructed Spanish Quarter, historic churches, and see colorful re-enactments of colonial days. St. George Street, a cobbled lane that bisects the St. Augustine historic district, offers shops, restaurants and several historic attractions.
4. **Anastasia Island**, reached by the Bridge of Lions that spans Matanzas Bay, is home to the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum. The St. Augustine Lighthouse holds the distinction as one of the first in Florida officially authorized by Congress. It was built in 1824 and the present 161-foot-tall tower, constructed in 1874, is the state's only spiral-banded lighthouse. Its iconic black and white spirals encase six flights

Continued on page 107

of stairs with frequent landings to make the climb an easy one. The St. Augustine Lighthouse and Museum offers visitors historical exhibits, activities, and nature trails daily.

5. **Fort Caroline National Memorial**, the short-lived but first French colony in the present-day United States, showcases the area's colonial past. Guided tours of the reconstructed 16th-century French fort explain the struggle between European colonial powers for control of Florida. The fort is part of the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve, along with Kingsley Plantation, a state-owned historic site. Visitors learn the story of Zephaniah Kingsley, a plantation owner and slave trader, as they tour the restored antebellum plantation house and tabby slave quarters. The site includes spectacular views of barrier islands, savannas, hardwood forest and wetlands.
6. **Amelia Island** on the Atlantic coast is a small barrier island where visitors find blocks of old mansions, miles of beaches and lots of seafood. The island's seaport village of Fernandina Beach showcases shops, fine restaurants and historic homes. Tours of the historic district are conducted from the Amelia Island Museum of History, located inside the old Nassau County jail. Amelia Island State Park is just 7 miles north of Little Talbot Island State Park on State Road A1A and 8 miles south of Fernandina Beach.



Osceola National Forest

7. **The Osceola National Forest** in Florida near the Georgia border includes significant landscapes: the Pinhook Swamp, a mosaic of wet pine flatwoods and swamp along the forest's northern boundary; Big Gum Swamp, a wilderness area with more than 13,000 acres of cypress-sweetgum swamp, found near the center of the forest; and Ocean Pond, a large, shallow lake popular for recreation and important in Florida's Civil War history. The Osceola National Forest was created by President Herbert Hoover's proclamation on July 10, 1931, and was named in honor of the Native American Seminole warrior, Osceola. Chief Osceola and his horse, Renegade, are the official mascots of the Florida State University Seminoles in Tallahassee.

Continued on page 108



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Flagler Beach Fishing Pier



Fort Clinch

Continued from page 107

8. The **Jacksonville Riverwalk** is great place to get some fresh air and exercise along the beautiful St. Johns River. This 1 1/4-mile concrete boardwalk attracts joggers, tourists, and visitors who choose to sit on benches and watch the riverboats, the shorebirds, and downtown's skyline reflected in the water. A water taxi dock near Chart House is available for kayak launch.
9. Flagler County offers the **Flagler Beach Fishing Pier**, which overlooks smooth, sandy beaches and serves as a prime location for sunning or fishing. Known as the quiet side of Florida, the area offers spectacular natural beauty and charm, plus some of the best golf in the state. In Palm Coast, you'll find a number of golf courses with interesting layouts designed by Arnold Palmer, Gary Player and Jack Nicklaus.
10. Explore the Civil War-era **Fort Clinch**, one of the most well-preserved 19th century forts in the country, at Fort Clinch State Park. In addition to the fort, the park offers great birding, fishing, shelling, swimming, picnicking, bicycling, shark-tooth hunting and wildlife viewing. Several miles of beach with hard-packed sand can be ridden during low tide with large-tire bicycles, available for rent at the Visitor Center for a nominal fee. On the first weekend of each month, a soldier garrison fires cannons and demonstrates other battlefield skills. At sunset, watch for shrimp boats laden with the day's catch as they return to the docks.

Please be sure to go online to check hours of operation, schedules and seasonal closings for the sites mentioned.

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Roadtrippers just released a new feature RVers are excited about: RV-friendly routing. Enter the dimensions and weight of your RV and if you have propane on board, and then Roadtrippers will help you plan a route specific to your RV.

The basic version is free to use, but for a \$29.99 annual membership fee, you get unlimited stops, live traffic updates, and more.

Togo RV

The Togo RV app now includes RV-specific navigation as a premium feature, available as part of a Roadpass Pro membership (\$49.99 annually). Simply select where you want to go, enter your vehicle measurements, and choose from nine route preferences, such as propane restrictions, tunnel and toll road avoidance, and more. The app will create a route tailored to your RV and preferences, so you can drive worry-free.

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Overnight RV Parking

Overnight RV Parking is the largest database of free overnight RV parking locations in North America. You can search by your current location, or by a city, state, or zip code to find overnight parking for your RV. Each location is color coded, so you can easily tell if it allows free parking, paid parking, or is part of a membership. It even shows which locations don't allow overnight parking, so you never have to worry if the Walmart in town will let you stay. Access to the database is available with a Roadpass Pro membership.

Campendium

Campendium lists a wide range of overnight camping spots, from RV parks to free dispersed camping sites. You can search on both the website and app to see photos and reviews from campers who have stayed in each location. It lists what (if any) amenities are available at each site and what cell phone coverage is like, a useful feature for those working on the road. Experience Campendium ad-free and enjoy other premium features with a Roadpass Pro membership.

Harvest Hosts

Want to park overnight at a winery, brewery, or farm? Harvest Hosts is a membership site that lets self-contained RVs park overnight at unique locations across the U.S. A basic Harvest Hosts subscription costs \$99 per year and allows you to stay overnight for free at more than 1,700 locations. Sites typically offer dry camping and members are encouraged to purchase something from the host to thank them for their hospitality. You can also purchase an upgraded golf membership for \$139 a year, which includes parking at golf courses and country clubs.

CAMPENDIUM APP



Using RV-friendly GPS and overnight parking apps will take the stress out of planning your epic vacation. And while these apps are helpful, you should always have a backup plan. The Rand McNally Road Atlas is the gold standard—and the one your parents probably had tucked under the front seat. State road maps can be found at most gas stations and truck stops.



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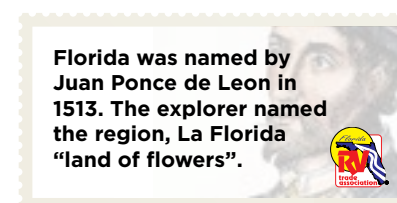
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The nearly 15-mile bike trail from Jacksonville to Baldwin is steeped in history. The original route was the Florida, Atlantic & Gulf Central Railroad, an important transportation corridor during the Civil War. It was built to connect Jacksonville to Tallahassee, but was torn up in places by Confederates retreating when Union troops occupied Jacksonville.

When Union troops marched west to destroy the bridge over the Suwannee River, the Confederates pushed them back to Jacksonville. Later, the track served as a CSX freight route and was decommissioned with the assistance of the state under the Rails-to-Trails program to become today's popular bike path.

The asphalt trail is open sunrise to sunset, and sheltered benches are stationed at regular intervals. Restrooms are available at most trailheads and at Camp Milton.



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In addition to preserving the light station, the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Museum is also diving into the past with underwater archaeology conducted by the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program (LAMP). The LAMP research team is currently studying a 1782 British shipwreck found off the St. Augustine coast.

Artifacts recovered from the vessel – including cannons, muskets, pewter spoons, and cauldrons – are currently undergoing conservation at the lighthouse in preparation for a future exhibit. Visitors can see the artifacts up close on guided tours offered daily at the museum.

Spirits are also a frequent feature at the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Museum. Every weekend, brave guests are invited to explore the Keepers' House after hours where they will hear the true stories of peril and paranormal activities recorded in the lighthouse history books before taking a dark climb up the tower. More than 200,000 folks from all over the world visit the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Museum each year to discover history, shipwreck secrets and ghostly encounters. The lighthouse and museum are open seven days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., year round (except for Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's).

For more information visit www.staugustinelighthouse.com



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Continued on page 118



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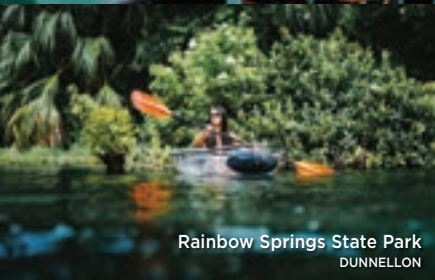
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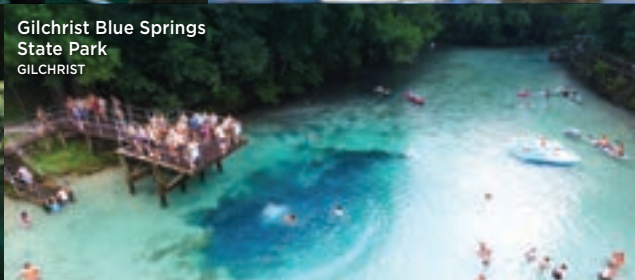
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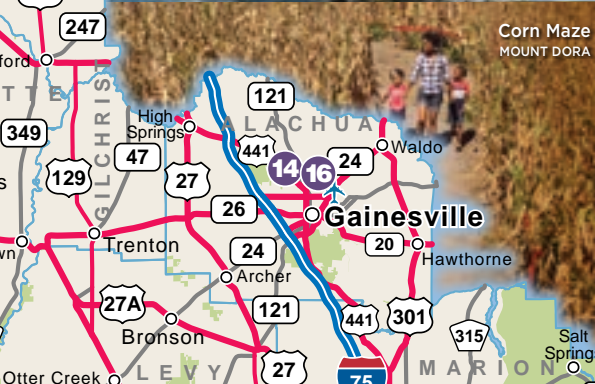
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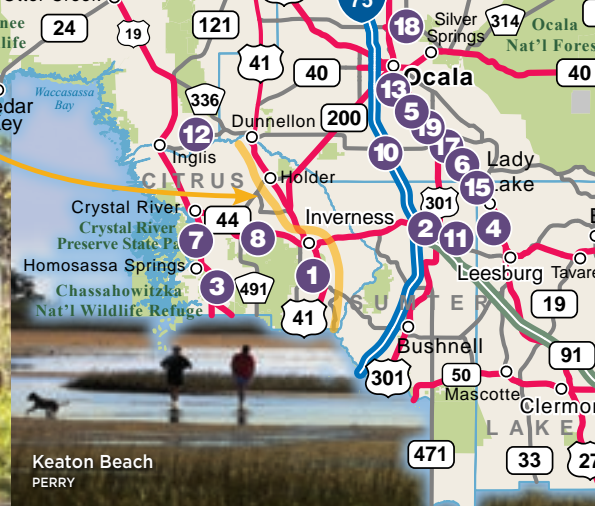
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Continued from page 114

Top 10 Places to Visit Outdoors in North Central Florida



Mount Dora

1. **Mount Dora** is home to historic landmarks but is now most well-known for the specialty shops and boutiques in the downtown area, and the nearby Renninger's. This 117-acre complex includes Renninger's Vintage Antique Center and a separate Flea and Farmer's Market. Two large buildings and a number of open air shopping areas house a wide variety of dealers from produce stands, clothing shops, and oddity vendors, to high quality antiques and collectibles. Renninger's is also home to a large number of special events, including antique fairs and extravaganzas, cars and guitars shows, swap meets, and vintage garden shows.
2. **Silver Springs State Park**, just outside of Ocala, is celebrating more than 100 years of thrilling visitors with views of crystal-clear waters through glass-bottom boats. Tourists first arrived by stagecoach and steamboat in the late 1870s to marvel at one of the largest artesian spring systems in the world, still one of the last uninhabited spring runs in the state. Today, Silver Springs is a 4,000-acre nature theme park that includes the Silver River and undeveloped Florida wetlands teeming with native wildlife. Hiking, biking, canoeing, kayaking, glass-bottom boat rides, camping, cabins, special events and concerts are available through a public/private partnership. The park was designated a National Natural Landmark in 1971.
3. **Devil's Den Prehistoric Spring** is a unique and popular natural attraction in Williston, southwest of Gainesville, which operates as a SCUBA diving training and recreational facility. The prehistoric springs and cave are privately owned but available for exploration by snorkeling or diving. The site includes a large RV Park. Devil's Den is a karst window that allows visitors to experience the subterranean river that winds under Florida and surfaces as springs across the state. Be sure to visit the website to plan a trip.

4. **The Cedar Keys Light Station** is a historic lighthouse on Seahorse Key built in 1854 when the town of Cedar Key was a depot for trade and communication on the Suwannee River. It is the smallest lighthouse in Florida at 33 feet tall, and only 35 steps, and was built in a house style that includes what resembles a cupola for the lantern. The lighthouse is open annually for two days on the third weekend in October, and is managed by the Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge.
5. **Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park**, a unique savanna designated as a National Natural Landmark, is located just south of Gainesville in Micanopy. This 21,000-acre park is a rich array of habitats for wildlife and livestock, including alligators, bison, horses and nearly 300 species of birds, living in numerous distinct biological communities. The park became Florida's first state preserve in 1971, and includes a 50-foot high observation tower for panoramic views. Noted artist and naturalist William Bartram called it the great Alachua Savannah when he wrote about his visit to the prairie in 1774.
6. **Devil's Millhopper Geological State Park**, just a few minutes northwest of downtown Gainesville, has attracted curious visitors since the 1880s. While a wooden boardwalk that normally takes visitors down 120 feet into a bowl-shaped limestone sinkhole to a miniature rain forest is currently closed, visitors can view the sinkhole from the nature trail. Small streams trickle down the steep slopes of the cavity and lush vegetation thrives in the shade of the walls.



Cedar Key

7. **Manatee Springs State Park**, on the banks of the Suwannee River, features one of Florida's largest springs, a first magnitude spring that flows directly into the Suwannee by way of a short run, as well as plenty of chances to view manatees and other wildlife in their natural habitats. The spring produces an average of 100 million gallons of clear, cool water daily. The park's 800-foot boardwalk runs through a majestic cypress forest overlooking the spring.

Continued on page 122



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The Paynes Prairie near Gainesville is the anchor point of a 15-mile rail trail that ends in the heart of Hawthorne. The Gainesville-Hawthorne Trail is often shady but surprisingly challenging, especially the western four miles that are not your typical old railroad bed. Climbs and curves keep riders attention, as do scenic overlooks on Paynes Prairie.

Managed by Florida State Parks, the Gainesville-Hawthorne Trail is open daylight hours. Leashed dogs are permitted. There is a fee for parking at the La Chua Trail trailhead, but all other access points are free.

At the Gainesville end of the trail – the starting point for most riders – you have three options for accessing the Gainesville-Hawthorne Trail: Depot Park, Boulware Springs, and La Chua.

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Homosassa Springs State Park



Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge

Continued from page 119

8. Over on the Gulf of Mexico in Citrus County, visitors on a floating observatory can see manatees every day at the nearby **Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park**. Enjoy a relaxing boat tour as part of your admission, weather permitting, and see native animals and visit the park's underwater observatory in the main spring.
9. In Levy County is the **Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge**, a 54,000-acre undeveloped river delta between Chiefland and Cedar Key that protects the ecosystems and coastal marshes of the Suwannee River. It is one of the largest protected delta systems in the United States.
10. Visit **Fanning Springs State Park** on the Suwannee River to enjoy grilling and picnicking under majestic live oaks. A stroll along the boardwalk allows you to step back in time to old Florida and a breathtaking cypress swamp with cypress knees standing six feet tall. The spring flows millions of gallons of water that stays at 72 degrees year round.

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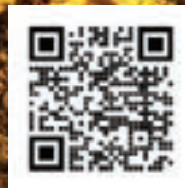
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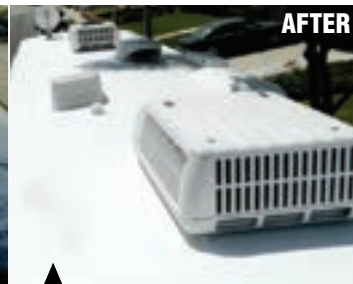


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Continued from page 41

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Phone: (305) 221-8776. Website: www.nps.gov/ever/index.htm

15. Big Cypress National Preserve

33100 Tamiami Trail East, Ochopee, FL

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Phone: (239) 695-1201. Website: www.nps.gov/bicy

16. Everglades National Park - Gulf Coast Visitor Center

815 Oyster Bar Lane, Everglades City, FL

Take boat tours, canoe, or kayak to enjoy the magnificent mangroves at the entrance to the Wilderness Waterway.
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17. Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park

137 Coastline Drive, Copeland, FL

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20. Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge

12085 S State Road 29, Immokalee, FL

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Bradenton, LECOM Park

The recently renovated LECOM Park dates back to 1923 and was originally called McKechnie Field for Hall of Fame Manager Bill McKechnie, a Pittsburgh native and former Bradenton resident. McKechnie managed the Pirates to the World Series championship in 1925. The Pirates have trained and played their spring games at this site since 1969, and the park still retains its historical charm.



Clearwater, BayCare Ballpark

Opened in 2004, BayCare Ballpark is the home of Phillies Spring Training and the Low-A Southeast League Clearwater Threshers. The Phillies have been hosting fans in Clearwater since 1947. The fan experience includes Frenchy's Tiki Pavilion, group picnic areas, and a 360-degree main concourse, open to the playing field. Clearwater Beach is among the best beaches in Florida, and offers many great restaurants along the beach.



Dunedin, TD Ballpark

The history of MLB in Dunedin dates back to 1977 when the expansion Toronto Blue Jays flew south for their first Grapefruit League season. The ballpark has been known by many names, including Dunedin Stadium, Florida Auto Exchange Stadium, and Grant Field. In addition to state-of-the-art baseball facilities, the park includes three picnic areas. The town of Dunedin is a short ferry ride from Caladesi Island, voted as one of the best beaches in the world. A paved 34-mile bike path extends from St. Petersburg to Tarpon Springs. Downtown Dunedin features more than 100 privately owned shops and restaurants.



Fort Myers, Hammond Stadium

Built in 1991, Bill Hammond Stadium's exterior is modeled after Churchill Downs, the famous Louisville racetrack, complete with a fountain and rows of parking that are named after former Twins greats such as Bert Blyleven, Tony Oliva, Harmon Killebrew, Jim Kaat, Kirby Puckett and Kent Hrbek. Nearby is Fort Myers Beach, or fans can drive across the causeway to Sanibel Island or Captiva Island. Fort Myers' historic buildings in the downtown district feature a variety of shops and restaurants.



Fort Myers, jetBlue Park at Fenway South

Just a few miles away is JetBlue Park, informally dubbed Fenway South. It was built in 2012 to resemble Fenway Park, complete with a Green Monster in left field. Boston's Spring Training stadium is one of the largest capacity in the Grapefruit League at 11,000 and is state of the art, with six practice fields surrounding it. Tradition is everywhere, including a Ted Williams statue just outside the ballpark, and photos inside the main concourse chronicling great moments in Red Sox history.



Jupiter, Roger Dean Chevrolet Stadium

Built in 1998, Roger Dean Chevrolet Stadium is one of two shared ballparks in the Grapefruit League. It features seating for nearly 7,000, including for another 200 fans who can spread out on a blanket on the Grass Berm, located just in front of the Party Deck in right field. The game day experience includes downtown Abacoa, with restaurants and sports bars filled with fans throughout the season, all within walking distance of the stadium. Fans can check out the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and Museum, located in a restored World War II housing quarters building, and MacArthur Beach State Park to kayak, fish, bird watch and snorkel.



North Port, CoolToday Park

Opened in March 2019, CoolToday Park is located 35 south of Sarasota. The park features 6,200 fixed seats that can accommodate up to 8,000, including the berm and standing room, team clubhouse, training facilities, a half-dozen practice baseball fields, six multi-use fields and space for the team's sports medicine academy. The complex is envisioned to become the heart of a planned "town center" commercial and residential district that will create opportunities for the college and nearby medical practices to partner with the team and its affiliates. The Braves relocated to Sarasota County after many years at the Wide World of Sports Complex in Walt Disney World.



Lakeland, Publix Field at Joker Marchant Stadium

No team has had a spring training relationship with a city longer than the Detroit Tigers, who have called Lakeland its Spring Training home since 1934, and played in this stadium since 1966. The main grandstand is the original structure, while the park has been renovated a few times. New in right field is an area called the Runway. Sitting in the upper reaches of the ballpark offers a view of Lake Parker, the largest of 38 named lakes in the city, and one of many waterfront parks. Nearby is Florida Southern College, whose campus was designed by renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright.



Port Charlotte, Charlotte Sports Park

Charlotte Sports Park, built in 1998, includes fixed seats, two berm areas, and a left-center field Tiki bar that seats nearly 70 fans. A 19,000-square-foot wooden concourse stretches around the outfield to provide 360-degree pedestrian circulation and impressive views of the field and bullpens. A kid's clubhouse features a playground behind the berm in right field.

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**Port St. Lucie,
Clover Park**

Opened in 1988, Clover Park's 7,000 plus capacity includes outdoor bars, grills and Tiki Bars. The stadium was renovated for the 2020 season: Improvements include new concessions, clubhouse and additional outfield areas for spectators. Port St. Lucie's establishments are supplemented by the shops and restaurants of Jensen Beach and Stuart, about a 20-minute drive. Inland is Lake Okeechobee, one of the largest freshwater lakes in the country.

**Sarasota,
Ed Smith Stadium**

Ed Smith Stadium, renovated in 2010 with Spanish-style architecture, honors its past with Orioles' retired numbers under the press box and suite area. Fans can enjoy shaded areas over their seats or go out to the left-field lawn for a more laid-back atmosphere, with concessions ranging from the traditional hot dog to crab cakes for a true Baltimore experience. The seats are refurbished ones from Oriole Park at Camden Yards, and three suites are numbered 66, 70, and 83, corresponding to the team's three World Series championships.

**Tampa,
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Originally called Legends Field, George M. Steinbrenner Field has the same dimensions as old Yankee Stadium, down to the inch. It was insisted to be so by the Boss, who, as the story goes, phoned the Bronx from Tampa during its construction in 1996 and had an employee measure the outfield wall during a driving snowstorm just to be sure the accuracy, according to MLB.com. A statue of Steinbrenner was erected outside the home-plate entrance after his 2010 passing, an exact replica of which stands inside Gate 6 at Yankee Stadium. The Yankees also have their own version of Monument Park outside the field's entrance, featuring all of the club's retired numbers and plaques about each player's career.

**West Palm Beach,
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This ballpark, opened in 2017, is one of two being shared in the Grapefruit League. The Houston Astros relocated here from Kissimmee, where they had trained since 1984. The Washington Nationals came from Viera, where the original Montreal Expos trained. The team became the Nationals in 2005. In addition to the stadium itself, the complex provides separate training facilities for the two teams. Each team has two major-league-size practice fields, four-minor-league-size practice fields, an agility field, a half field, batting cages, and pitching mounds.

For more information, visit floridagrapefruitleague.com.

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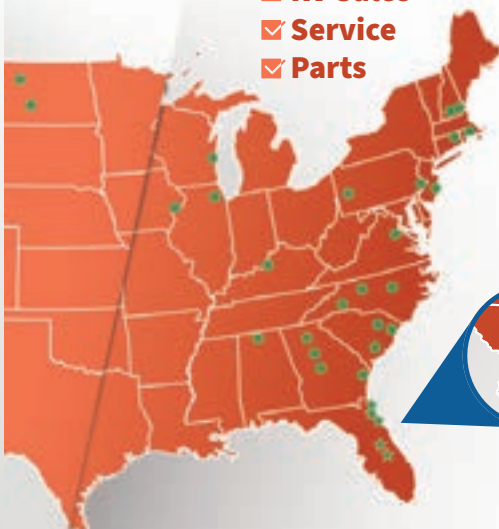
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