AITDC Quarterly Report

3rd Quarter FY 2021

(April - June)

AMELIA ISLAND

CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Memo

To: Amy Bell
From: Gil Langley
Date: 8/20/21
Re: AITDC 3rd Quarter Report to the BOCC

Attached you will find the AITDC 3rd Quarter Report to the BOCC (April-June 2021), which is due electronically today for our presentation on Wednesday, September 15th. I have summarized below what is included in the reports:

- **Economic Impact**: $233 million, up 154% YOY
- **Visitation**: Number of Visitors up 98% YOY as the island was pretty much closed in April 2020
- **Visitor Origins**: Showing growth coming back from Northeast and Midwest markets
- **STR Performance**: Occupancy for the quarter averaged 70.6% with strong pricing power showing average daily rate (ADR) of $314 and Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR) of $221.22
    - It's great to see strong occupancy and rate this quarter as we increased the supply of rooms in May with the opening of the Courtyard and Springhill Suites
- **Bed Tax Collections**: Quarterly taxable sales totaled $63,906,970, up 102% over projections based on a quicker return of the industry than expected. The resultant bed tax collection for the quarter was $3,224,421
- **Arrivalist**: FYTD, the estimated sample arrivals indicate that day trippers make up 64% of outside visitation to Amelia Island. Thirty percent of overnight visitors stayed 4+ nights. This past quarter made up 38% of the total arrivals to the island this fiscal year to date.
- **Marketing Performance**: marketing efforts this quarter included, but were not limited to:
    - **Paid Advertising** (April -June): approximately $280,000 spend resulting in over 21 million impressions and a click through rate (CTR) of .63%. Media was weighted for digital (programmatic, online video, rich media) but also included some audio, email, search, social and video. Campaigns include targeting for leisure and meeting audiences.

  - **AmeliaIsland.com**: 359K sessions with over 743K pageviews from 285K users
  - **Emails**: Distributed 9 emails for an average open rate of 19.6% and CTR of 1.7%
- **Social**:
  - Facebook: 94,65K fans, up 2%, 17.44K engagements, down 34%, 15.06M impressions from 66 organic posts + 108 paid posts
  - Instagram: 22.4K fans, up 5%, 640.66K impressions, down 32%, 309 profile website taps, up 11% from 87 organic posts + 41 paid posts
  - LinkedIn: 7.74K impressions, up 99%, 287 engagements, up 104% for 32 organic posts.

As you can see, tourism on Amelia Island set new records with the pent-up demand from travelers during COVID-19. It appears that July was also a great month, but it is yet to be seen how the COVID-19 Delta variant will impact tourism this fall and winter.

1. Financial Reports: (STR, Munis, Bed Tax)

FOR 2021 09

ACCOUNTS FOR: 137 AI TOURIST DEVELOPMENT FUND	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	ENCUMBRANCES	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
37521582 TDC ADMIN FEES-TRANS OUT							
137 .521.582.58.591910.CLERK		ADMINISTRATIVE FEE-CLERK					
	71,250	0	71,250	61,481.59	.00	9,768.41	86.3%
137 .521.582.58.591910.TAXCO		ADMIN FEE-TAX COLLECTOR					
	71,250	0	71,250	61,481.59	.00	9,768.41	86.3%
TOTAL TDC ADMIN FEES-TRANS OUT	142,500	0	142,500	122,963.18	.00	19,536.82	86.3%
37522552 TDC RESEARCH/ADMIN							
137 .522.552.55.531041.		MANAGEMENT FEE-CVB					
	691,125	0	691,125	459,162.91	.00	231,962.09	66.4%
TOTAL TDC RESEARCH/ADMIN	691,125	0	691,125	459,162.91	.00	231,962.09	66.4%
37523552 TDC MARKETING							
137 .523.552.55.531000.		PROFESSIONAL SERVICES					
	5,000	50,000	55,000	.00	50,000.00	5,000.00	90.9%
137 .523.552.55.531000.LCPRJ		PROFESSIONAL SERVICES					
	0	200,000	200,000	.00	.00	200,000.00	.0%
137 .523.552.55.534250.		MARKETING DATA					
	100,000	0	100,000	76,300.00	23,050.00	650.00	99.4%
137 .523.552.55.540000.ENTNT		TRAVEL AND PER DIEM					
	7,300	0	7,300	.00	.00	7,300.00	.0%
137 .523.552.55.540000.LODGE		TRAVEL AND PER DIEM					
	10,000	0	10,000	1,372.20	.00	8,627.80	13.7%
137 .523.552.55.540000.MEALS		TRAVEL AND PER DIEM					
	10,000	0	10,000	.00	.00	10,000.00	.0%
137 .523.552.55.540000.TRAVL		TRAVEL AND PER DIEM					
	15,000	0	15,000	91.89	.00	14,908.11	.6%
137 .523.552.55.542000.FULFL		FREIGHT AND POSTAGE SERVICES					
	10,000	0	10,000	538.43	.00	9,461.57	5.4%
137 .523.552.55.542000.POSTG		FREIGHT AND POSTAGE SERVICES					
	1,500	0	1,500	.00	.00	1,500.00	.0%
137 .523.552.55.548110.CONTE		PRODUCTIONS					
	325,000	-89,000	236,000	79,723.24	6,283.39	149,993.37	36.4%

FOR 2021 09

ACCOUNTS FOR: 137 AI TOURIST DEVELOPMENT FUND	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	ENCUMBRANCES	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
137 .523.552.55.548110.DESGN	200,000	PRODUCTIONS 89,000	289,000	167,651.37	98,354.80	22,993.83	92.0%
137 .523.552.55.548120.AUDIO	25,000	PAID MEDIA 0	25,000	10,000.00	4,000.00	11,000.00	56.0%
137 .523.552.55.548120.DIGIT	1,250,000	PAID MEDIA 260,000	1,510,000	947,483.15	440,293.52	122,223.33	91.9%
137 .523.552.55.548120.INTNL	100,000	PAID MEDIA -25,000	75,000	.00	.00	75,000.00	.0%
137 .523.552.55.548120.OOH	175,000	PAID MEDIA -100,000	75,000	.00	.00	75,000.00	.0%
137 .523.552.55.548120.PRINT	725,000	PAID MEDIA -100,000	625,000	103,635.56	208,697.50	312,666.94	50.0%
137 .523.552.55.548120.VIDEO	150,000	PAID MEDIA 0	150,000	.00	.00	150,000.00	.0%
137 .523.552.55.548240.LICEN	50,000	INTERACTIVE 0	50,000	12,261.79	.00	37,738.21	24.5%
137 .523.552.55.548240.SPEC	275,000	INTERACTIVE 0	275,000	106,263.53	70,739.55	97,996.92	64.4%
137 .523.552.55.548240.TOOLS	75,000	INTERACTIVE 0	75,000	44,396.56	20,216.32	10,387.12	86.2%
137 .523.552.55.548350.	450,000	PARTNERS/SPONSORSHIPS/GNTS -200,000	250,000	500.00	.00	249,500.00	.2%
137 .523.552.55.548350.AIMOH	17,500	PARTNERS/SPONSORSHIPS/GRANT 0	17,500	17,500.00	.00	.00	100.0%
137 .523.552.55.548350.EVNTG	50,000	PARTNERS/SPONSORSHIPS/GRANT 0	50,000	45,000.00	.00	5,000.00	90.0%
137 .523.552.55.548350.FFCG	65,000	PARTNERS/SPONSORSHIPS/GRANT 0	65,000	60,000.00	.00	5,000.00	92.3%
137 .523.552.55.548350.JAXSP	55,000	PARTNERS/SPONSORSHIPS/GRANT 0	55,000	50,000.00	.00	5,000.00	90.9%
137 .523.552.55.548520.	30,000	SPECIAL EVENTS 0	30,000	1,915.00	.00	28,085.00	6.4%
137 .523.552.55.548520.DOC	200,000	SPECIAL EVENTS 0	200,000	15,218.43	.00	184,781.57	7.6%
137 .523.552.55.548520.HOLDY	150,000	SPECIAL EVENTS 0	150,000	100,511.01	.00	49,488.99	67.0%
137 .523.552.55.548520.RESTW	5,000	SPECIAL EVENTS 0	5,000	3,687.98	.00	1,312.02	73.8%
137 .523.552.55.548520.SPEC	0	SPECIAL EVENTS 0	0	.00	1,137.15	-1,137.15	100.0%*
137 .523.552.55.548520.WELLN	50,000	SPECIAL EVENTS 0	50,000	.00	.00	50,000.00	.0%
137 .523.552.55.548710.PREXP	61,075	PUBLIC RELATIONS 0	61,075	2,147.86	30,300.00	28,627.14	53.1%

FOR 2021 09

ACCOUNTS FOR: 137 AI TOURIST DEVELOPMENT FUND	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	ENCUMBRANCES	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
137 .523.552.55.548710.PRSPC		PUBLIC RELATIONS					
	72,000	0	72,000	45,000.00	27,000.00	.00	100.0%
137 .523.552.55.552000.		MISC OPERATING SUPPLIES					
	2,250	0	2,250	.00	.00	2,250.00	.0%
137 .523.552.55.564000.		EQUIPMENT					
	2,250	0	2,250	.00	.00	2,250.00	.0%
TOTAL TDC MARKETING	4,718,875	85,000	4,803,875	1,891,198.00	980,072.23	1,932,604.77	59.8%
37523581 TRANS OUT-GENERAL-EQUIPMENT							
137 .523.581.58.591016.		TRANS OUT-GENERAL-EQUIPMENT					
	1,000	0	1,000	.00	.00	1,000.00	.0%
TOTAL TRANS OUT-GENERAL-EQUIPMENT	1,000	0	1,000	.00	.00	1,000.00	.0%
37524552 TDC TRADE SHOWS/TRAVEL TR							
137 .524.552.55.534000.WELMC		OTHER CONTRACTUAL SERVICES					
	5,000	0	5,000	660.00	.00	4,340.00	13.2%
137 .524.552.55.540000.ENTNT		TRAVEL AND PER DIEM					
	20,000	0	20,000	160.79	.00	19,839.21	.8%
137 .524.552.55.540000.LODGE		TRAVEL AND PER DIEM					
	20,000	0	20,000	2,826.92	.00	17,173.08	14.1%
137 .524.552.55.540000.MEALS		TRAVEL AND PER DIEM					
	10,000	0	10,000	1,635.64	.00	8,364.36	16.4%
137 .524.552.55.540000.SALMS		TRAVEL AND PER DIEM					
	5,000	0	5,000	.00	.00	5,000.00	.0%
137 .524.552.55.540000.TRAVL		TRAVEL AND PER DIEM					
	25,000	0	25,000	814.58	.00	24,185.42	3.3%
137 .524.552.55.541000.WELMC		COMMUNICATIONS					
	5,000	0	5,000	2,761.70	.00	2,238.30	55.2%
137 .524.552.55.542000.DRAYG		FREIGHT AND POSTAGE SERVICES					
	6,500	0	6,500	.00	.00	6,500.00	.0%
137 .524.552.55.542000.FULFL		FREIGHT AND POSTAGE SERVICES					
	35,000	0	35,000	21,619.42	5,152.73	8,227.85	76.5%
137 .524.552.55.542000.POSTG		FREIGHT AND POSTAGE SERVICES					
	10,000	0	10,000	21.10	.00	9,978.90	.2%
137 .524.552.55.543000.WELMC		UTILITY SERVICES					
	10,000	0	10,000	2,993.52	.00	7,006.48	29.9%

FOR 2021 09

ACCOUNTS FOR: 137 AI TOURIST DEVELOPMENT FUND	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	ENCUMBRANCES	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
137 .524.552.55.544000.WELMC		RENTALS AND LEASES					
	10,000	0	10,000	9,212.00	1,875.00	-1,087.00	110.9%*
137 .524.552.55.545000.WELMC		INSURANCE					
	5,000	0	5,000	1,630.00	.00	3,370.00	32.6%
137 .524.552.55.547000.		PRINTING-BROCHURES					
	200,000	0	200,000	15,641.18	7,165.96	177,192.86	11.4%
137 .524.552.55.548018.INTNL		TRAVEL TRADE					
	90,000	0	90,000	.00	.00	90,000.00	.0%
137 .524.552.55.548018.MEETG		TRAVEL TRADE					
	150,000	0	150,000	30,548.00	.00	119,452.00	20.4%
137 .524.552.55.548018.NICHE		TRAVEL TRADE					
	25,000	0	25,000	.00	.00	25,000.00	.0%
137 .524.552.55.548018.TDREL		TRAVEL TRADE					
	15,000	0	15,000	3,552.93	1,049.00	10,398.07	30.7%
137 .524.552.55.548018.TDSHW		TRAVEL TRADE					
	15,000	0	15,000	.00	.00	15,000.00	.0%
137 .524.552.55.548019.INCTV		HOSPITALITY SERVICES					
	15,000	0	15,000	.00	.00	15,000.00	.0%
137 .524.552.55.548019.PUBAW		HOSPITALITY SERVICES					
	25,000	0	25,000	8,957.54	1,400.00	14,642.46	41.4%
137 .524.552.55.548019.WELMC		HOSPITALITY SERVICES					
	7,500	0	7,500	5,108.80	.00	2,391.20	68.1%
137 .524.552.55.548161.FAMS		FAMILIARIZATIONS					
	15,000	0	15,000	186.80	.00	14,813.20	1.2%
137 .524.552.55.548161.FLTFS		FAMILIARIZATIONS					
	20,000	0	20,000	.00	.00	20,000.00	.0%
137 .524.552.55.548161.SALMS		FAMILIARIZATIONS					
	15,000	0	15,000	.00	.00	15,000.00	.0%
137 .524.552.55.549000.WELMC		OTHER CURRENT CHARGES & OBLIGA					
	100,000	0	100,000	32,274.43	37,925.57	29,800.00	70.2%
137 .524.552.55.552000.		MISC OPERATING SUPPLIES					
	11,750	0	11,750	.00	.00	11,750.00	.0%
137 .524.552.55.552007.		PROMOTIONAL SUPPLIES					
	75,000	0	75,000	6,989.39	.00	68,010.61	9.3%
137 .524.552.55.554006.		DUES/SUBSCRIPT/TRAINING					
	15,000	0	15,000	4,121.59	.00	10,878.41	27.5%
TOTAL TDC TRADE SHOWS/TRAVEL TR	960,750	0	960,750	151,716.33	54,568.26	754,465.41	21.5%
37525539 TDC BEACH IMPROVMENTS							
137 .525.539.53.534102.		CONTRACT SERVICE-BEACH CLEAN					
	1,145,750	-388,500	757,250	10,418.95	.00	746,831.05	1.4%

FOR 2021 09

ACCOUNTS FOR: 137 AI TOURIST DEVELOPMENT FUND	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	ENCUMBRANCES	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
137 .525.539.53.534102.OFBCH		CONTRACT SERVICE-BEACH CLEAN					
	0	64,500	64,500	36,000.00	24,000.00	4,500.00	93.0%
137 .525.539.53.534102.ONBCH		CONTRACT SERVICE-BEACH CLEAN					
	0	324,000	324,000	216,000.00	108,000.00	.00	100.0%
137 .525.539.53.552000.		MISC OPERATING SUPPLIES					
	5,000	0	5,000	.00	.00	5,000.00	.0%
137 .525.539.53.554000.		DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS					
	10,000	0	10,000	6,500.00	.00	3,500.00	65.0%
137 .525.539.53.581202.		AID-CITY OF FERNANDINA BCH					
	0	50,000	50,000	25,872.35	.00	24,127.65	51.7%
137 .525.539.53.581202.BRSP		AID-CITY OF FERNANDINA BCH					
	300,000	-50,000	250,000	.00	.00	250,000.00	.0%
TOTAL TDC BEACH IMPROVMENTS	1,460,750	0	1,460,750	294,791.30	132,000.00	1,033,958.70	29.2%
TOTAL AI TOURIST DEVELOPMENT FUND	7,975,000	85,000	8,060,000	2,919,831.72	1,166,640.49	3,973,527.79	50.7%
TOTAL EXPENSES	7,975,000	85,000	8,060,000	2,919,831.72	1,166,640.49	3,973,527.79	

FOR 2021 09

	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ ADJSTMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	ENCUMBRANCES	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
GRAND TOTAL	7,975,000	85,000	8,060,000	2,919,831.72	1,166,640.49	3,973,527.79	50.7%

** END OF REPORT - Generated by Nate Aron **

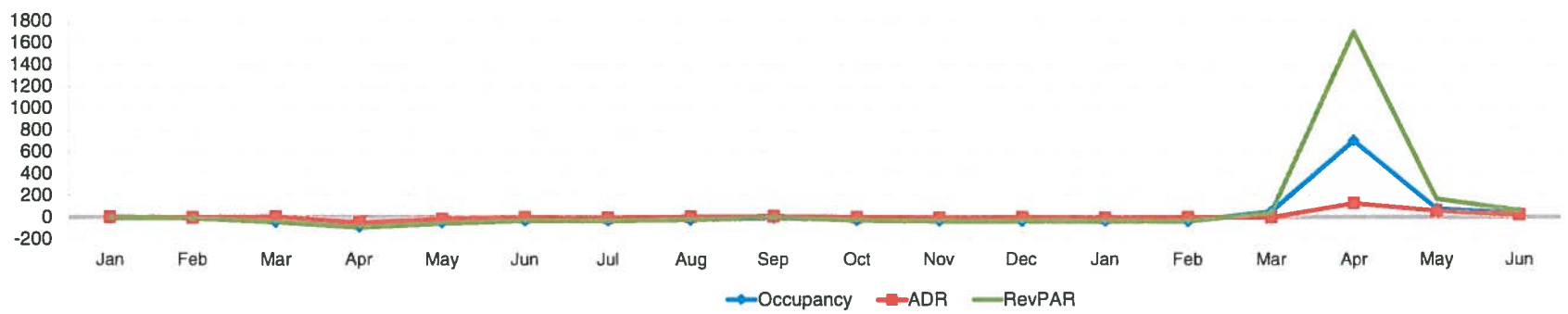
Tab 3 - Trend Amelia Island+

Amelia Island Tourist Development Council

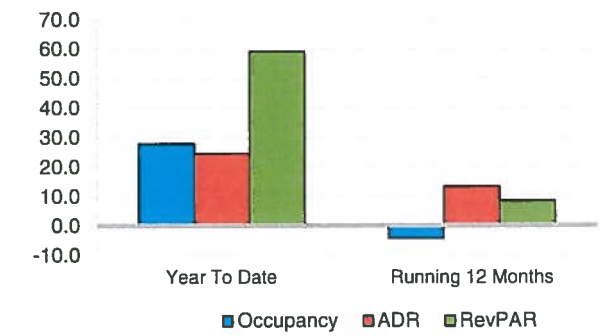
For the Month of June 2021

Currency: USD - US Dollar

Monthly Percent Change



Overall Percent Change



Occupancy (%)	2020												2021						Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
This Year	55.3	71.2	44.5	9.1	37.6	57.0	57.1	47.6	50.0	45.9	38.9	33.0	36.7	43.0	65.1	72.5	64.3	75.1	77.3	46.9	59.9	73.4	55.1	52.8
Last Year	60.0	78.0	83.9	81.8	78.1	82.1	83.8	64.2	54.5	65.3	59.8	52.7	55.3	71.2	44.5	9.1	37.6	57.0	76.3	77.3	46.9	71.2	73.4	55.1
Percent Change	-7.7	-8.7	-46.9	-88.9	-51.9	-30.5	-31.9	-25.9	-8.3	-29.7	-35.0	-37.4	-33.8	-39.7	46.1	699.4	71.1	31.7	1.3	-39.3	27.9	3.1	-24.9	-4.3

ADR	2020												2021						Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
This Year	187.99	197.86	293.83	134.96	213.46	255.38	259.70	221.48	217.86	210.04	199.75	178.15	170.06	189.07	277.46	303.84	329.57	308.29	253.39	224.59	279.51	238.92	223.94	253.61
Last Year	183.84	207.77	293.39	278.83	263.83	268.50	275.82	221.52	202.09	214.36	213.03	188.57	187.99	197.86	293.83	134.96	213.46	255.38	251.36	253.39	224.59	231.34	238.92	223.94
Percent Change	2.3	-4.8	0.2	-51.6	-19.1	-4.9	-5.8	0.0	7.8	-2.0	-6.2	-5.5	-9.5	-4.4	-5.6	125.1	54.4	20.7	0.8	-11.4	24.5	3.3	-6.3	13.2

RevPAR	2020												2021						Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
This Year	104.04	140.89	130.81	12.24	80.21	145.63	148.31	105.38	108.86	96.36	77.71	58.83	62.34	81.24	180.50	220.33	211.87	231.47	195.75	105.24	167.53	175.37	123.49	133.81
Last Year	110.24	162.04	246.01	228.21	206.15	220.43	231.23	142.22	110.06	139.88	127.49	99.47	104.04	140.89	130.81	12.24	80.21	145.63	191.68	195.75	105.24	164.65	175.37	123.49
Percent Change	-5.6	-13.1	-46.8	-94.6	-61.1	-33.9	-35.9	-25.9	-1.1	-31.1	-39.0	-40.9	-40.1	-42.3	38.0	1699.6	164.1	58.9	2.1	-46.2	59.2	6.5	-29.6	8.4

Supply	2020												2021						Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
This Year	61,442	55,496	61,442	46,650	61,442	59,460	61,442	61,442	59,460	61,442	59,460	61,442	61,411	55,468	61,411	59,430	68,820	66,600	340,099	345,932	373,140	682,799	694,861	737,828
Last Year	58,249	52,612	58,249	56,370	58,249	56,370	58,249	58,249	56,370	58,249	56,370	61,442	61,442	55,496	61,442	46,650	61,442	59,460	337,203	340,099	345,932	679,995	682,799	694,861
Percent Change	5.5	5.5	5.5	-17.2	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	27.4	12.0	12.0	0.9	1.7	7.9	0.4	1.8	6.2

Demand	2020												2021						Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
This Year	34,003	39,519	27,353	4,232	23,088	33,906	35,087	29,235	29,712	28,189	23,131	20,290	22,514	23,835	39,950	43,096	44,242	50,004	262,733	162,101	223,641	501,190	383,186	389,285
Last Year	34,930	41,033	48,843	46,137	45,513	46,277	48,833	37,396	30,701	38,010	33,735	32,410	34,003	39,519	27,353	4,232	23,088	33,906	257,146	262,733	162,101	483,965	501,190	383,186
Percent Change	-2.7	-3.7	-44.0	-90.8	-49.3	-26.7	-28.1	-21.8	-3.2	-25.8	-31.4	-37.4	-33.8	-39.7	46.1	918.3	91.6	47.5	2.2	-38.3	38.0	3.6	-23.5	1.6

Revenue	2020												2021						Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
This Year	6,392,225	7,819,054	8,037,261	571,143	4,928,396	8,658,915	9,112,201	6,474,990	6,473,034	5,920,740	4,620,415	3,614,737	3,828,623	4,506,476	11,084,678	13,094,295	14,580,904	15,415,906	66,574,675	36,406,994	62,510,881	119,743,714	85,810,440	98,726,998
Last Year	6,421,614	8,525,503	14,330,124	12,864,193	12,007,826	12,425,414	13,469,145	8,283,989	6,204,310	8,147,937	7,186,486	6,111,578	6,392,225	7,819,054	8,037,261	571,143	4,928,396	8,658,915	64,635,112	66,574,675	36,406,994	111,961,385	119,743,714	85,810,440
Percent Change	-0.5	-8.3	-43.9	-95.6	-59.0	-30.3	-32.3	-21.8	4.3	-27.3	-35.7	-40.9	-40.1	-42.4	37.9	2192.6	195.9	78.0	3.0	-45.3	71.7	7.0	-28.3	15.1

Census %	2020												2021					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Census Props	18	18	18	16	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	20	20
Census Rooms	1982	1982	1982	1555	1982	1982	1982	1982	1982	1982	1982	1982	1981	1981	1981	1981	2220	2220
% Rooms Participants	95.9	95.9	95.9	72.0	82.8	95.9	89.2	89.2	89.2	89.2	89.2	89.7	89.1	89.1	89.1	89.1	90.3	90.3

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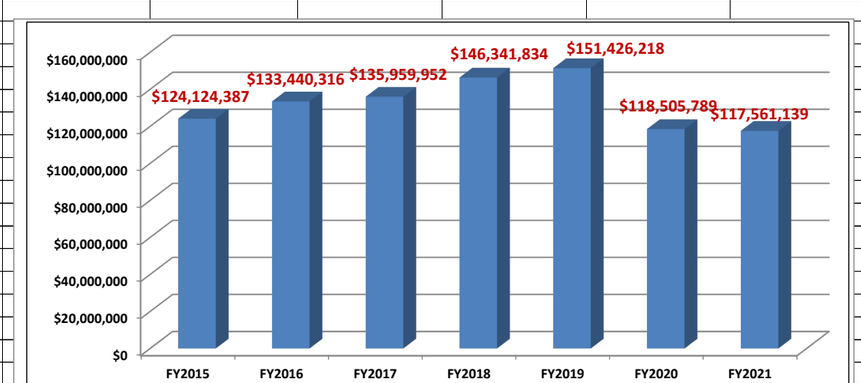
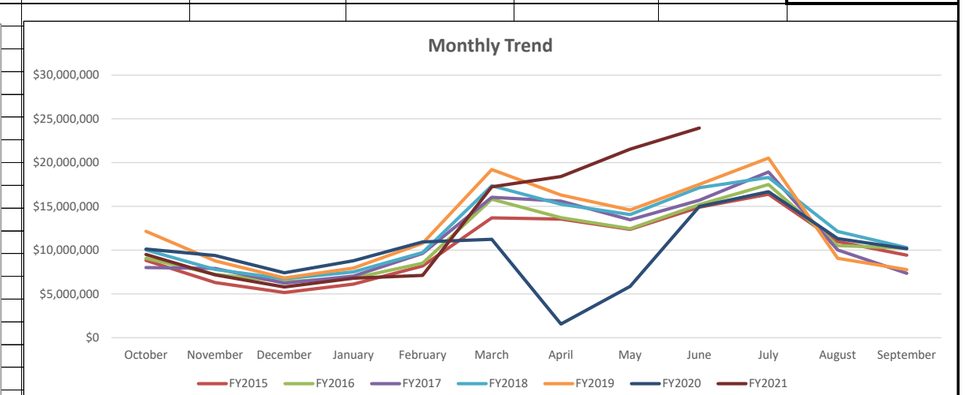
Amelia Island Tourism Development Council
Monthly Taxable Collections

AMELIA ISLAND
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Actual Sales	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	FY Total
FY 2010	$3,824,925	$4,127,108	$2,662,768	$3,061,087	$3,872,714	$7,180,869	$7,250,176	$6,771,684	$9,192,997	$11,420,967	$6,161,937	$4,134,125	**$69,661,357**
FY 2011	$5,117,877	$3,146,563	$2,891,727	$3,057,380	$4,477,079	$8,042,178	$9,089,680	$7,348,455	$9,319,735	$10,455,155	$5,315,503	$4,709,634	**$72,970,966**
FY 2012	$5,873,108	$4,083,078	$3,224,742	$2,732,955	$4,600,703	$9,471,861	$8,896,159	$7,524,447	$9,654,444	$10,416,601	$6,309,424	$5,300,489	**$78,088,012**
FY 2013	$5,993,912	$4,252,420	$3,048,178	$3,744,771	$5,098,560	$10,724,414	$10,388,492	$9,925,245	$11,911,552	$12,710,654	$8,908,306	$6,817,183	**$93,523,687**
FY2014	$7,475,837	$6,034,530	$4,166,409	$5,565,369	$6,515,370	$12,374,283	$12,550,221	$12,039,768	$12,963,890	$14,986,010	$9,814,050	$7,623,141	**$112,108,878**
FY2015	$8,825,683	$6,296,108	$5,161,284	$6,116,785	$8,198,689	$13,685,610	$13,547,538	$12,378,353	$14,913,734	$16,387,766	$10,972,556	$9,427,872	**$124,124,387**
FY2016	$9,071,000	$7,228,216	$6,394,566	$6,789,618	$8,508,848	$15,822,132	$13,706,888	$12,461,791	$15,209,784	$17,501,019	$10,522,990	$10,223,465	**$133,440,316**
FY2017	$8,004,857	$7,920,339	$6,228,205	$7,028,403	$9,634,435	$16,040,637	$15,611,677	$13,478,363	$15,698,386	$18,932,545	$10,027,764	$7,354,342	**$135,959,952**
FY2018	$10,033,381	$7,804,652	$6,726,088	$7,507,735	$9,731,687	$17,354,427	$15,246,878	$14,076,436	$17,129,696	$18,306,670	$12,131,307	$10,292,877	**$146,341,834**
FY2019	$12,155,507	$8,765,734	$6,823,561	$7,949,841	$10,779,734	$19,202,124	$16,298,866	$14,585,578	$17,510,133	$20,523,960	$9,060,000	$7,771,180	**$151,426,218**
FY2020	$10,128,614	$9,388,756	$7,419,955	$8,789,542	$10,934,638	$11,241,038	$1,562,200	$5,870,100	$14,996,600	$16,680,000	$11,320,940	$10,173,407	**$118,505,789**
FY2021	$9,508,249	$7,184,780	$5,794,181	$6,806,312	$7,120,775	$17,239,873	$18,417,341	$21,535,062	$23,954,566				**$117,561,139**
% Change	**-6.12%**	**-23.47%**	**-21.91%**	**-22.56%**	**-34.88%**	**53.37%**	**1078.94%**	**266.86%**	**59.73%**	**-100.00%**	**-100.00%**	**-100.00%**	**-0.80%**
Sales Monthly													
FY2021 Projected	$5,325,028	$5,769,636	$4,808,030	$4,166,960	$7,051,778	$12,180,344	$10,898,202	$9,295,525	$11,464,345	$12,821,414	$5,769,636	$5,449,101	**$95,000,000**
FY2021 Actual	$9,508,249	$7,184,780	$5,794,182	$6,519,792	$7,120,775	$17,239,873	$18,417,341	$21,535,062	$23,954,566				**$117,274,620**
% Change	**78.56%**	**24.53%**	**20.51%**	**56.46%**	**0.98%**	**41.54%**	**68.99%**	**131.67%**	**108.95%**				**23.45%**
Sales YTD													
FY2020	$10,128,614	$19,517,369	$26,937,324	$35,726,866	$46,661,504	$57,902,542	$59,464,742	$65,334,842	$80,331,442	$97,011,442	$108,332,382	$118,505,789	
FY2021	$9,508,249	$16,693,029	$22,487,209	$29,293,522	$36,414,296	$53,654,170	$72,071,511	$93,606,573	$117,561,139				
% Change	**-6.12%**	**-14.47%**	**-16.52%**	**-18.01%**	**-21.96%**	**-7.34%**	**21.20%**	**43.27%**	**46.35%**				
Bed Tax YOY													
FY2020	$506,491	$464,756	$368,909	$429,206	$548,288	$560,487	$78,110	$293,505	$749,830	$834,000	$566,047	$508,347	**$5,907,978**
FY2021 Budget	$266,251	$288,482	$240,402	$208,348	$352,589	$609,017	$544,910	$464,776	$573,217	$641,071	$288,482	$272,455	**$4,750,000**
FY2021 Actual	$481,597	$352,976	$293,026	$325,990	$359,764	$832,840	$943,014	$1,090,601	$1,190,806		$0	$0	**$5,870,612**
% vs FY2020	**-4.92%**	**-24.05%**	**-20.57%**	**-24.05%**	**-34.38%**	**48.59%**	**1107.28%**	**271.58%**	**58.81%**	**-100.00%**	**-100.00%**	**-100.00%**	**-0.63%**
% vs Budget	**80.88%**	**22.36%**	**21.89%**	**56.46%**	**2.03%**	**36.75%**	**73.06%**	**134.65%**	**107.74%**	**-100.00%**	**-100.00%**	**-100.00%**	**23.59%**
Bed Tax YTD													
FY2020 YTD	$506,491	$971,247	$1,340,156	$1,769,362	$2,317,651	$2,878,138	$2,956,248	$3,249,753	$3,999,583	$4,833,583	$5,399,630	$5,907,978	
FY2021 YTD	$481,597	$834,573	$1,127,599	$1,453,588	$1,813,352	$2,646,192	$3,589,206	$4,679,807	$5,870,612				
Pace vs LY	**-4.92%**	**-14.07%**	**-15.86%**	**-17.85%**	**-21.76%**	**-8.06%**	**21.41%**	**44.00%**	**46.78%**	**21.45%**	**8.72%**	**-0.63%**	

FY2015	$124,124,387
FY2016	$133,440,316
FY2017	$135,959,952
FY2018	$146,341,834
FY2019	$151,426,218
FY2020	$118,505,789
FY2021	$117,561,139





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2. RDS – Visitor Profile Dashboard & Concours Week Estimated Economic Impact

RESEARCH DATA SERVICES, INC.
2612 WEST LYKES COURT • TAMPA, FLORIDA 33611
TEL (813) 254-2975

Amelia Island Calendar Year Second Quarter 2021 *(Apr. – Jun.)* Visitor Profile Dashboard

Prepared for:
Amelia Island Tourist Development Council

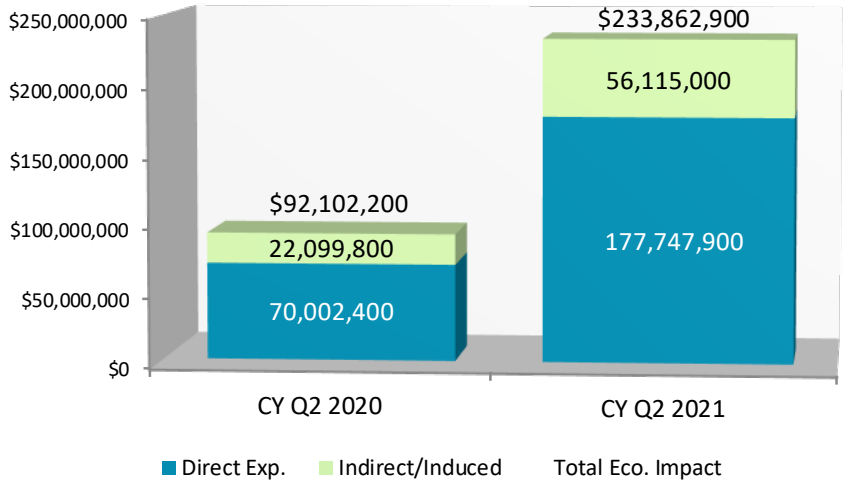
Prepared by:
Research Data Services, Inc.
Research@ResearchDataLLC.com

July 27, 2021

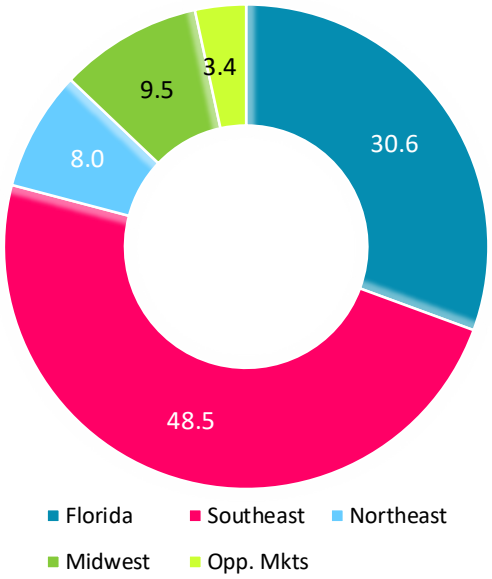
*H/M/C/C * Visitor Stats*	Fiscal Year to Date *(Oct. - Jun.)* FYTD 2020	FYTD 2021	% Δ '20/'21	CY Second Quarter *(Apr. - Jun.)* 2020	2021	% Δ '20/'21
Visitors (#)	403,000	468,100	+16.2	101,600	201,300	+98.1
Direct Exp. ($)	$295,085,600	$373,708,100	+26.6	$70,002,400	$177,747,900	+153.9
Total Eco. Impact ($)	**$388,244,200**	**$491,687,700**	+26.6	**$92,102,200**	**$233,862,900**	+153.9

** Visitors staying in commercial lodging subject to the resort tax (hotel/motel/condo, etc.)*

CY Q2 Economic Impact



CY Q2 2021 Visitor Origin Distribution *(%)*



Visitor Origins	Fiscal Year to Date *(Oct. - Jun.)* FYTD 2020	FYTD 2021	% Δ '20/'21	CY Second Quarter *(Apr. - Jun.)* 2020 # of Visitors	2021 # of Visitors	% Δ '20/'21
Florida	93,738	131,096	+39.9	33,122	61,598	+86.0
Southeast	162,303	226,841	+39.8	51,308	97,631	+90.3
Northeast	62,930	44,617	-29.1	7,823	16,104	+105.9
Midwest	53,351	47,816	-10.4	6,096	19,123	+213.7
Foreign	13,547	0	-100.0	0	0	n/a
Opportunity Mkts	17,131	17,730	+3.5	3,251	6,844	+110.5
Total	**403,000**	**468,100**	**+16.2**	**101,600**	**201,300**	**+98.1**

** Amelia Island's CY Q2 2020 and 2021 foreign visitation was too small to measure.*

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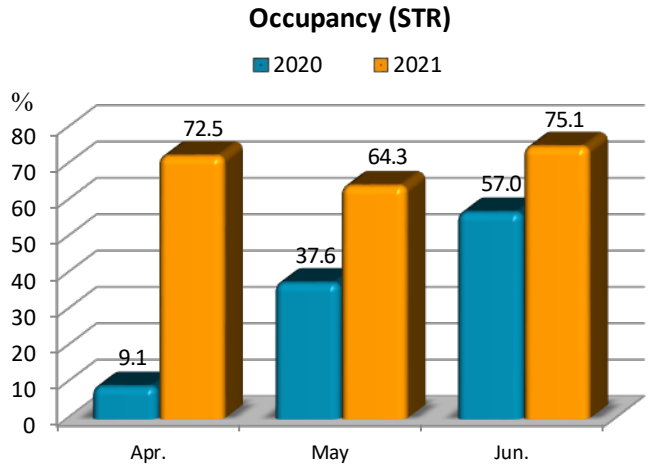
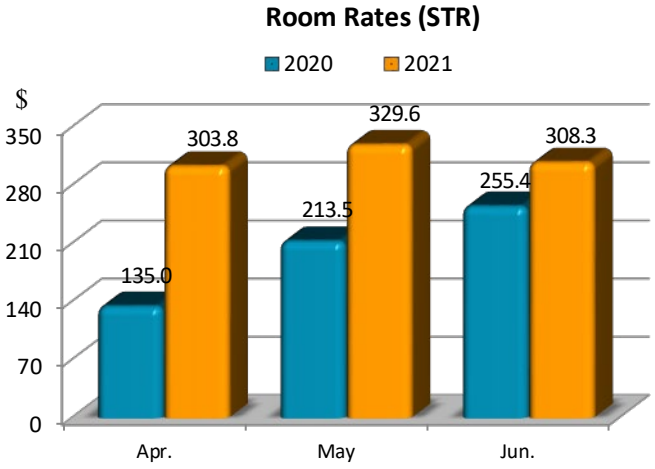
*Occupancy and ADR (STR)***	April	May	June
Occupancy 2021	72.5%	64.3%	75.1%
Occupancy 2020 †	9.1	37.6	57.0
Δ % Occ. ('20/'21)	**+699.4%**	**+71.1%**	**+31.7%**
ADR 2021	$303.84	$329.57	$308.29
ADR 2020 †	134.96	213.46	255.38
Δ % ADR ('20/'21)	**+125.1%**	**+54.4%**	**+20.7%**
RevPAR 2021	$220.33	$211.87	$231.47
RevPAR 2020 †	12.24	80.21	145.63
Δ % RevPAR ('20/'21)	**+1,699.6%**	**+164.1%**	**+58.9%**

*** Source: Smith Travel Research;* † 2020 Update





Research Data market research+

2021 Amelia Island Concours Week Estimated Economic Impact

May 19 – 23, 2021

The study of the ***2021 Concours Week*** was implemented to document the economic impact of the events. The findings of the study are based on 315 interviews conducted with randomly selected 2021 Concours Week attendees.

Specifically, our event-related findings are as follows:

- Estimated Total Direct Expenditures of Off-Island Visitors (Overnight and Day-trippers): **$20,096,600** *(2020: $22,146,600).*
- Estimated Total Economic Impact of Off-Island Visitors: **$26,440,900** *(2020: $29,138,200).*
  Amelia Island Tourism Multiplier: 1.3157

Concours Week Visitor Impact Breakouts:	2020	2021
Staying In Commercial Lodging on Amelia Island	$20,485,000	$20,672,700
Staying in Commercial Lodging *(Not Amelia Island)*	$6,210,700	$4,456,700
Day-trippers	$1,310,900	$739,000
Staying with Friends/Relatives	$1,131,600	$572,500

Concours Week Visitor Distribution:	2020	2021
Staying In Commercial Lodging on Amelia Island	32.5%	45.6%
Staying in Commercial Lodging *(Not Amelia Island)*	24.7%	22.2%
Day-trippers	24.0%	18.9%
Staying with Friends/Relatives	6.3%	3.9%
Amelia Island Residents	12.5%	9.4%

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3. Tourism Activity Reports (April – June)

Tourism Activity Report

April 2021

Mission Statement

Created by the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners in 1988, the Amelia Island Tourist Development Council (AITDC) oversees the development and marketing of Amelia Island as a world-class tourism destination. As provided by Florida law, the AITDC is responsible for the expenditure of revenues received from the levy and imposition of the tourism development tax.

The goals of the AITDC are to generate visitation to Amelia Island and its attractions/special events, thereby increasing tax revenues, including sales taxes and those imposed on the hospitality industry. In turn, those tax revenues may be used to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the community, provide support for beach re-nourishment, and ensure a viable hospitality industry.

The key focus areas of Amelia Island TDC are:

Events & Promotions:

- Visitor Services
- Monthly Meetings
- Travel & Trade
- Special Events

Marketing:

- Strategy
- Advertising
- Content/Social
- Website
- Collateral

Public Relations:

- Writers
- Coverage
- Press Releases
- Promotions

Events & Promotions

Visitor Services

- For **April, we delivered 75** cases of collateral to partners
- **Audited partner rack cards and informed partners that are not represented to replenish**
- **April number of visitors – 2082; number of bags prepared (wedding/group) 50.**
- On-Going COVID-19 Safety Measures: Plexiglass partition at front desk, 6 ft social distancing markers on floor, employees required to wear masks and check temperature before each shift, hand sanitizer available for employees, distributing masks and hand sanitizer to visitors, restricting visitor access to brochure information by preparing handouts with area information. Posting signs about safety requirements and masks requirements. Disinfect doors handles and public surfaces hourly. Distribute Covid-19 kits to businesses. Post signs and distribute masks to public.

- On-Going Operations: Prepare welcome packets for meetings and tours, check hotel availability, assist visitors with area information, dining, and hotel reservations. Attend trade shows. Prepare research reports.
- Received inventory & selling tickets for Concourse d' Elegance.

Collateral

- **Mailed 575 Visitor Guides to fulfill online requests.**
- **Distributed 75 cases of collateral to tourism partners.**
- **Redesigning "Kids Bucket List", "Rainy Day Activities", and "Rental Lists" for Welcome Center and plan to print enough for accommodations to start handing out as well.**
- **Beach Brochure general content drafted and being reviewed by County and City for accuracy.**
- **Bike Map is next priority for updating**

Partner Relations

- **Tourism Partner Bi-Weekly Newsletter continued**
- **Continue to meet with new and established partners to ensure they are getting the most out of AICVB resources.**
- **Added 4 additional business listings on AmeliaIsland.com. Identified 19 businesses that could be considered a tourism related partner to add to website after review.**
- **13 Partners participating in the Island Perks Incentive card program, many sold out.**
- **VisitFlorida business listings initial review, plans to improve Amelia Island's presence on site.**
- **Initial research/discovery on Vacation Rental performance tracking and forecasting tools completed, formal quotes collected and direction of program under review.**
- **Added capabilities on AmeliaIslandTDC.com for partners to submit their upcoming specials and promos**
- **Met with new owners of Baby Cakes, Hoytt House, Tea & Spice, Palette Shop, Sea Horse Rentals, TurnKey, V-Pizza, Vintage Market, and Cosmic Kids.**

Monthly/Partnership Meetings

- Monthly Florida's First Coast of Golf meeting
- Main Street board and organization meetings
- Regular calls with agencies: Silvertech, Hayworth, Starmark, My Agency
- Calls with Destinations International, Brand USA
- Amelia Island Partner meetings/calls/contact
- Discussions with new Commissioners
- BOCC Workshop

Travel Trade

- **Various online webinars and virtual tradeshows gearing towards the travel trade industry.**
- **Attended Northstar Meetings Group – Incentive Live / GMID edition, Tucson AZ**
- **Global Meetings Industry Day 2021**
- **Return to Travel by AAA Virtual Tradeshow**

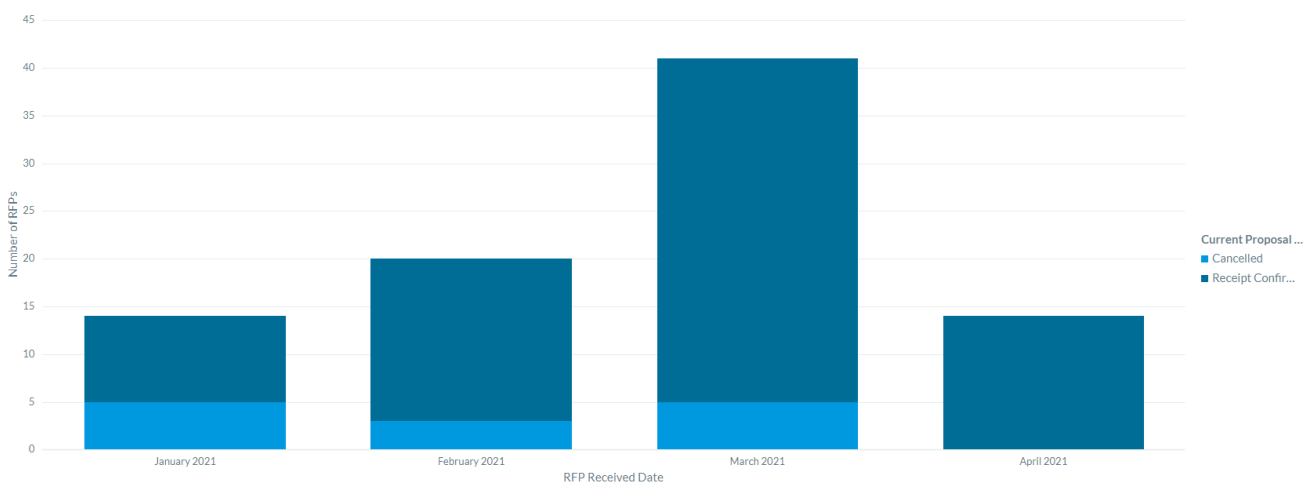
- **Northstar Meetings Group – IPEC, Louisville KY**

- **Ongoing work with Cvent and AmeliaIsland.com RFP's**
    - **Incoming RFP's continue to steadily roll in as a result of our ongoing meetings campaign.**

Unique RFPs by Month

RFP Received Date	Meeting Space and Sleeping Rooms	Meeting Space Only	Sleeping Rooms Only	Totals
December 2020	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2
January 2021	22 (95.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)	23
February 2021	20 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	20
March 2021	39 (95.1%)	1 (2.4%)	1 (2.4%)	41
April 2021	39 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	39
May 2021	31 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	31

RFPs by Proposal Status



- **Ongoing Networking with MPI, FSAE, SITE, Destination International**
- **Ongoing networking with Meeting Planners via LinkedIn & phone calls**
- **Management of the Flights for Sites program**
- **Developing new meeting focused/group marketing collateral with partner agency, Starmark**
- **Tradeshow forecasting for remaining FY21 & FY22.**

- **Ongoing partnership discussions with Destination Management Companies, exploring sponsorship opportunities.**
    - **Ethos Event Collective**
        - **Co-sponsoring upcoming IRF to include gift on transportation, video play, and two attendance spots.**
    - **Imprint Events Group, DMC**
- **Planning for Incentive Research Foundation Educational Forum attendance in June**

Special Events

- **Dickens on Centre & Holiday Lighting – continued planning**
    - **Site visits with COFB for holiday lighting**
    - Vendor calls for clarification of RFP needs.
    - Draft of DOC Event Safety Plan initiated
    - Presented plans to COFB Special Events Committee for approval – Permit Approved.
- Concours Week event outreach to partners for 2021 plans based on AICDE date change to May: Finalized communications and promotion plan and shared with partner.

Marketing

Operations

- **Ongoing work on PO requisitions, tracking, invoice processing, P&P review, etc.**
- **Destinations International DMAP accreditation 4-year renewal application in progress**
- **Ongoing updates to digital signage system in Welcome Center using in-house management platform OptiSigns.**
- **Ongoing work on FY20 budgeting and forecasting details for FY21 budgets based on revised TDT collections and plans**
- **Submitted initial FY22 budget with coding and rationale for approval.**
- **Pending policy and procedures with County**
- Continuous management of the CARES Grant with Nassau County, coordinating between FRLA, partners, and County; Application process; submitting final backup documentation for billing.
- Updated crisis plan with new contact info

Strategy

- **Continuous execution and oversight of annual marketing plan**
- **Media planning & execution –**
    - **FY21Q3 media plan monitoring and optimization across digital and social channels.**
        - **Approved creative executions for media program rollouts – updating creative for SEM, social and niche marketing**
        - **Refreshed leisure social marketing exeuctions to avoid wearout**
    - **Working with Starmark on Q4 media plans for additional budget flexibility**
        - **Submitted County paperwork based on 3Q plan and 4Q budget**

    - **Planning internal CVB media buys to boost ongoing recovery efforts; focus on vacation rental, golf, weddings, as targeted extension of brand campaign**
    - **Dedicated Meetings support launched and ongoing via digital media and e-marketing. Website redesign, expansion and optimization ongoing.**
    - **Finalized partner co-op programs; IOs for publishers; final contracts with partners, for external publishers as well as AICVB dedicated e-mail marketing program**
    - **Finalized cooperative program with Florida's First Coast of Golf**
- **Continuous review, optimization, and execution of Marketing Dashboard for content, blog and email messaging including SEM strategy**
- **Ongoing work with Starmark on creative development and media including extensions of Moments campaign for weddings leveraging partner content**
- **Meetings program creative development:**
    - **Finalized meetings campaign including media program targeting planners**
    - **Distributed final meeting video to partners, on website and into media planner hubs on CVENT and Northstar and social**
    - **Updated meetings landing page content**
    - **Added dedicated meeting pages supporting Tours for Groups and Teambuilding**
    - **Reviewing collateral for update to Meetings brochure and incremental high impact placements during key meeting planner time frame in 3Q/4Q**
- **Finalized persona program to understand post-pandemic traveler – optimize media planning, retargeting and website with new insights. Developing personalization options into website for fully immersive experience based on key drivers learned from research insights**
- **Finalized nature video posted online, in email and to partners, including America Beach Museum**
- **Ongoing review, development, and execution of content calendar and editorial strategy across all channels including blog, email, social media, and website promotions**
- **Reviewing AR app for next phase over summer 2021**
- **Island Perks – tourism incentive program**
    - **Finalized amendment to contract for pilot program with Tremendous**
    - **Finalized partner recruitment and onboarding for lodging partner offers**
    - **Finalized and printed Island Perk card holders**
    - **Developed new landing page on AI.com**
    - **Press release finalized**
    - **Launched in targeted and dedicated marketing**
    - **Hosted partner training Zoom**
    - **Ongoing maintenance as partners sell-out test allocations**
- **Management of tourism research**
    - **Working with RDS on calendar year report**
    - **Starting development of Year in Review collateral design**
    - **Working with economic development on unemployment data related to tourism industry**
- **Assisting County on environmental branding signage program, American Beach community plan and beach park planning**

Website & Digital

- **Ongoing work on database management and optimization – launched Welcome series to incorporate demographics and psychographics of existing base for further targeting. Initiated automated Welcome service into user experience to build on data collection and understand demographics and**

interests within our database loyalists. 100% response rate to welcome email program since launch in March 2021.

- **Homepage design and redesigned global navigation launched across AmeliaIsland.com. Ongoing updates and reformatting into better user experience. Added Webcams page off global navigation for traveler's interested in beach views in planning. Redesign of Tour Guide pages and Photo and Video tour pages in concepting .**
- **Expanded and unified organization of key business and community partners within the website to better serve the broad scope of visitor engagements. Redefined categories for consistency and optimization of key business drivers around Beach, Outdoor Activities, Shop, Arts & Culture, Spa & Wellness and Sports & Recreation.**
- **Redefined Lodging categories for clarity to Resorts, Hotels & Motels, Bed & Breakfasts, Vacation Rentals and Camping. Revised Dining categories for better searchability to Fine Dining, Casual Dining, Breakfast & Coffee, Ice Cream & Desserts, International, Seafood and Bars & Breweries.**
- **Broad expansion of over 15 dedicated Meetings pages including reorganization targeted to Meeting Planner needs, expanded information and redesign of communications aimed to drive Meeting business across the island.**
- **Added dedicated opt-in for Meeting Planner communications, designing communication strategy and database management plan for FY21 launch.**
- **Launched redesigned and updated Wedding dedicated pages to reach special events and wedding milestone travelers.**
- **Refined and redesigned Business Listing pages across existing categories and added new "Other" Category to host additional business – both venue and services – supporting Meetings/Special events and weddings. Ongoing input of partner data for consistent and broadened amenities to better serve vertical segments for over 300+ partners.**
- **Continuous update of Calendar of Events**
- **Managing ongoing editorial /content calendar for marketing efforts including blogs, emails, homepage promotional spaces on website, social.**
- **Blogs – Traveling with Toddlers, Your Guide to All Things Central Island, Amelia Island Golfers Getaway Itinerary, Celebrate Every Mother This Mother's Day.**
- **Launched email SEO and SEM optimization through blogs and email to better drive performance through paid search consisting of Pillar articles and Cluster blogs that target key words and phrases to drive SEO value in Google analytics. Built SEO dedicated long-format content to deliver SEO rich scoring by Google algorithm.**
- **Added Micro-Release articles into editorial calendar for use across owned media channels and PR.**
- **Regular status calls and program management with SilverTech.**
- **Ongoing optimization of landing page and email support around Social photo contest designed to encourage visitors to share their own photographs of memorable Amelia Island moments past and present. Goal is to generate broad library of imagery and loyalists. Leveraging partner participation in Monthly and Grand Prizes.**
- **Optimized interaction with email program, including co-op emails, by A/B testing of subject, use of emojis, video and animation.**
- **Reviewing digital tools to optimize video platforms including Vimeo, YouTube and Wistia for user experience as well as developing content strategy to keep library of materials and content current.**
- **Shifted search engine marketing efforts to Starmark; leveraging editorial strategy into blog communications to optimize SEO and SEM for leisure campaigns, Meetings and Weddings campaigns.**
- **Developed and updated new landing pages supporting Concours Week and Island Perks**

- **Revised and built Amelia Island meeting planner hub microsites with curated content on CVENT, NorthStar prior to launch of messaging. Update and optimization of Visit Florida city pages and content in development.**

Social Media

	FY21	QTR 1	QTR 2	APRIL
Facebook	Fans	92,992	93,631	93,631
	Impressions	17,664,602	4,778,586	4,778,586
	Reach	12,842,708	3,055,707	3,055,707
	Engagements	26,027	5,712	5,712
Instagram	Fans	21,402	20,784	21,770
	Impressions	930,708	297,388	193,351
	Reach	721,155	252,113	145,351
	Engagements	27,714	4,321	6,050
Linked In	Fans	588	665	665
	Impressions	2,716	2,099	2,099
	Reach	2,505	1,310	1,310
	Engagements	248	105	105
Total	Fans	114,982	115,080	113,429
	Impressions	18,598,026	5,078,073	9,558,519
	Reach	13,566,368	3,309,130	3,474,956
	Engagements	53,989	21,810	11,777

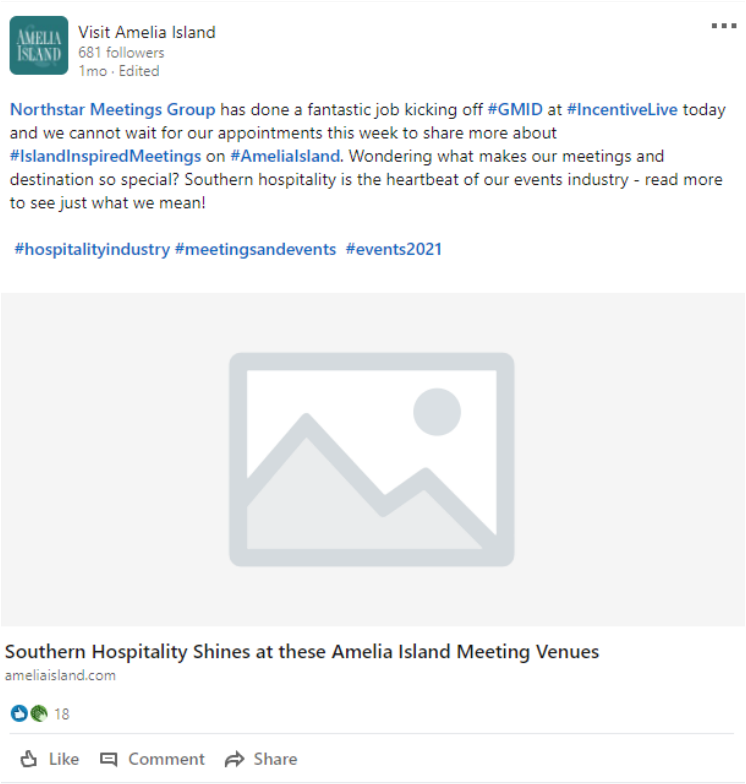
Overview

- **Content focused on UGC and beauty content.**
- **Mother's Day and Concours were previewed throughout the month.**
- **Focused on LinkedIn link sharing.**
- **Top engaging posts by channel:**

Facebook: UGC

Instagram: Earth Day

LinkedIn: Northstar Meetings Group



COVID-19 Response

- Amelia Island branded hand sanitizer stations ordered, arrived, installed
- Updated ongoing changes related to COVID-19 consumer pages and managed TDC website for COVID-19 updates and resources
- **Ongoing maintenance of consumer website on COVID-19 travel advisory page, homepage banner, homepage button, business status update page/chart.**
- **Ongoing communications of state and county executive orders to tourism industry partners as necessary**
- Working closely with tax collector office to facilitate communications to over 500 short term rental owners
- Advocating to government officials on behalf in industry for crisis response programs from federal government
- Executed industry newsletters to tourism partners
- Working with Nassau County CARES team execution of FRLA Seal of Commitment; submitted CARES application, coordinating communication, etc.

Film Commission

- Responding to Film Commission requests
    - National Geographic

Public Relations

Writers/Influencers

Note: Influencers/Writers stays mostly paused due to low room inventory at resorts and hotels.

- **Connected with Stephanie Craig / History Fan Girl for visit in at the end of May. She was originally on the Black History Virtual Media Tour.**
- **Connected with Kelly Fulford of Golf Stay and Play. Visited with the Omni and The Ritz-Carlton for hosted golf trips in April 26 -28.**
- **Connected with Patricia Maristch/Preppy Publicist for potential visit. Planning on trip at the end of May.**
- **Connected with writer Katie McElveen on potential story feature in Due South.**
- **Connected with Jill Becker for potential story in NE Georgia Living magazine.**
- **Connected with freelancer Tim Ebner for potential visit. Pending hotel availability.**
- **Planned Oneika Raymond / Oneika the Traveler visit for April 28 – May 1.**
- **Connected with Ashley Shaw from Southern Lady. She was originally on the Black History Virtual Media Tour. Amelia Island was featured in Southern Lady.**
- **Worked with Chadd on Welcome to Florida podcast advertising opportunity. First month trial occurred during April.**
- **Postponed all virtual media trips. Partners expressed they didn't have the time and writers expressed zoom fatigue.**

Press/Outreach

- **Wrote press release for vaccine distribution at the Omni Amelia Island Resort and The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island. The release did not get distributed since the resorts decided to just keep it to staff and not open it up to hospitality community.**
- **Provided information on to Tourism Marketing Today for cover feature.**
- **Provided information to VISIT FLORIDA on Mother's Day in Florida.**
- **Provided information to VISIT FLORIDA on Florida's Best Kept Secrets.**
- **Provided information to VISIT FLORIDA on National Tourism and Travel Week.**
- **Provided information to VISIT FLORIDA on Independence Day.**
- **Provided information to VISIT FLORIDA on Florida for Kids.**
- **Provided information on Best Honeymoon Destinations to HARO Lead.**
- **Provided information on Family Friendly Vacations to Parents.**

- **Provided information to MSN on pirate check-in at The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island.**
- **Sent national leads out on employment needs in Amelia Island.**
- **Updated the Accommodations press kit.**
- **Updated the Dining press kit.**

Communication

- **Reached out to all accommodation partners for upcoming deals and holidays.**
- **Provided activity report.**
- **Updated Forecast.**
- **Participated in phone call on vaccines for the hospitality industry.**
- **Participated on Starmark team calls.**
- **Participated on Silvertech call for influencers.**

Social Media

- **Created and posted across social media platforms.**
- **Monitored social media platforms.**

Promotional

- **Arranged a photoshoot with Cabana Life at the Omni Amelia Island Resort. Photoshoot temporarily postponed.**
- **Working with The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island on Women's Health Giveaway.**

Tourism Activity Report

May 2021

Mission Statement

Created by the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners in 1988, the Amelia Island Tourist Development Council (AITDC) oversees the development and marketing of Amelia Island as a world-class tourism destination. As provided by Florida law, the AITDC is responsible for the expenditure of revenues received from the levy and imposition of the tourism development tax.

The goals of the AITDC are to generate visitation to Amelia Island and its attractions/special events, thereby increasing tax revenues, including sales taxes and those imposed on the hospitality industry. In turn, those tax revenues may be used to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the community, provide support for beach re-nourishment, and ensure a viable hospitality industry.

The key focus areas of Amelia Island TDC are:

Events & Promotions:

- Visitor Services
- Monthly Meetings
- Travel & Trade
- Special Events

Marketing:

- Strategy
- Advertising
- Content/Social
- Website
- Collateral

Public Relations:

- Writers
- Coverage
- Press Releases
- Promotions

Events & Promotions

Visitor Services

- May collateral delivery - May, we delivered 54 cases of collateral to partners
- May number of visitors – 2016; number of bags prepared (wedding/group) 60.
- May received inventory & sold tickets for Concours d' Elegance.
- On-Going Operations: Prepare welcome packets for meetings and tours, check hotel availability, assist visitors with area information and direction to visitors, encouraging first-time and repeat visitation, assist with dining, and hotel reservations, encouraging first-time and repeat visitation. Displays and distributes information of potential interest to guests including lodging activities and events. Attends trade shows. Assist conference groups with area information when needed.

Collateral

- Mailed 575 Visitor Guides to fulfill online requests.
- Distributed 75 cases of collateral to tourism partners.
- Redesigning "Kids Bucket List", "Rainy Day Activities", and "Rental Lists" for Welcome Center and plan to print enough for accommodations to start handing out as well.
- Beach Brochure general content drafted and being reviewed by County and City for accuracy.
- Bike Map is next priority for updating.

Partner Relations

- Tourism Partner Bi-Weekly Newsletter continued
- Continue to meet with new and established partners to ensure they are getting the most out of AICVB resources.
- Added 4 additional business listings on AmeliaIsland.com. Identified 19 businesses that could be considered a tourism related partner to add to website after review.
- 13 Partners participating in the Island Perks Incentive card program, many sold out.
- Visit Florida business listings initial review, plans to improve Amelia Island's presence on site.
- Initial research/discovery on Vacation Rental performance tracking and forecasting tools completed, formal quotes collected and direction of program under review.
- Added capabilities on AmeliaIslandTDC.com for partners to submit their upcoming specials and promos.
- Met with new owners of Baby Cakes, Hoytt House, Tea & Spice, Palette Shop, Sea Horse Rentals, TurnKey, V-Pizza, Vintage Market, and Cosmic Kids.

Monthly/Partnership Meetings

- Monthly Florida's First Coast of Golf meeting
- Main Street board and organization meetings
- Regular calls with agencies: Silvertech, Hayworth, Starmark, My Agency
- Calls with Destinations International, Brand USA
- Amelia Island Partner meetings/calls/contact
- Discussions with new Commissioners
- BOCC Workshop

Travel Trade

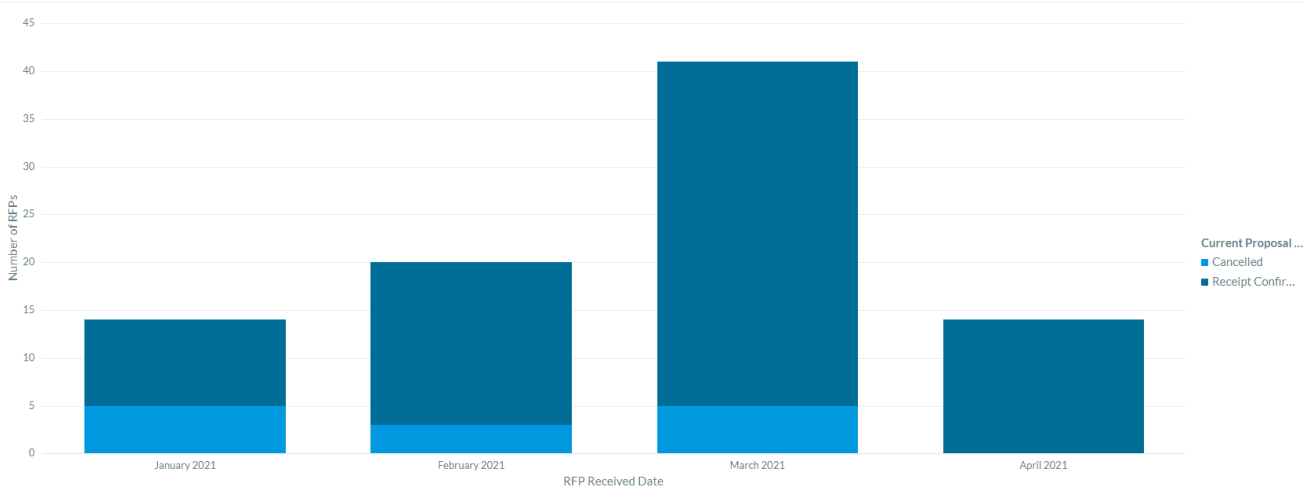
- Various online webinars and virtual tradeshows gearing towards the travel trade industry.
- Attended Northstar Meetings Group – Incentive Live / GMID edition, Tucson AZ
- Global Meetings Industry Day 2021
- Return to Travel by AAA Virtual Tradeshow
- Northstar Meetings Group – IPEC, Louisville KY

- Ongoing work with Cvent and AmeliaIsland.com RFP's
    - Incoming RFP's continue to steadily roll in as a result of our ongoing meetings campaign.

Unique RFPs by Month

RFP Received Date	Meeting Space and Sleeping Rooms	Meeting Space Only	Sleeping Rooms Only	Totals
December 2020	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2
January 2021	22 (95.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)	23
February 2021	20 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	20
March 2021	39 (95.1%)	1 (2.4%)	1 (2.4%)	41
April 2021	39 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	39
May 2021	31 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	31

RFPs by Proposal Status



- Ongoing Networking with MPI, FSAE, SITE, Destination International
- Ongoing networking with Meeting Planners via LinkedIn & phone calls
- Management of the Flights for Sites program
- Developing new meeting focused/group marketing collateral with partner agency, Starmark
- Tradeshow forecasting for remaining FY21 & FY22.

- Ongoing partnership discussions with Destination Management Companies, exploring sponsorship opportunities.
    - Ethos Event Collective
        - Co-sponsoring upcoming IRF to include gift on transportation, video play, and two attendance spots.
    - Imprint Events Group, DMC
- Planning for Incentive Research Foundation Educational Forum attendance in June

Special Events

- Dickens on Centre & Holiday Lighting – continued planning
    - Site visits with COFB for holiday lighting
    - Vendor calls for clarification of RFP needs.
    - Draft of DOC Event Safety Plan initiated
    - Presented plans to COFB Special Events Committee for approval – Permit Approved.
- Concours Week event outreach to partners for 2021 plans based on AICDE date change to May: Finalized communications and promotion plan and shared with partner.

Marketing

Operations

- Ongoing work on PO requisitions, tracking, invoice processing, P&P review, etc.
- Destinations International DMAP accreditation 4-year renewal application in progress
- Ongoing updates to digital signage system in Welcome Center using in-house management platform OptiSigns.
- Ongoing work on FY20 budgeting and forecasting details for FY21 budgets based on revised TDT collections and plans.
- Submitted initial FY22 budget with coding and rationale for approval.
- Pending policy and procedures with County
- Continuous management of the CARES Grant with Nassau County, coordinating between FRLA, partners, and County; Application process; submitting final backup documentation for billing.
- Updated crisis plan with new contact info.

Strategy

- Continuous execution and oversight of annual marketing plan
- Media planning & execution –
    - FY21Q3 media plan monitoring and optimization across digital and social channels.
        - Approved creative executions for media program rollouts – updating creative for SEM, social and niche marketing.
        - Refreshed leisure social marketing executions to avoid wear out.
    - Working with Starmark on Q4 media plans for additional budget flexibility
        - Submitted County paperwork based on 3Q plan and 4Q budget.

    - Planning internal CVB media buys to boost ongoing recovery efforts; focus on vacation rental, golf, weddings, as targeted extension of brand campaign.
    - Dedicated Meetings support launched and ongoing via digital media and e-marketing. Website redesign, expansion, and optimization ongoing.
    - Finalized partner co-op programs; IOs for publishers; final contracts with partners, for external publishers as well as AICVB dedicated e-mail marketing program.
    - Finalized cooperative program with Florida's First Coast of Golf
- Continuous review, optimization, and execution of Marketing Dashboard for content, blog and email messaging including SEM strategy.
- Ongoing work with Starmark on creative development and media including extensions of Moments campaign for weddings leveraging partner content.
- Meetings program creative development:
    - Finalized meetings campaign including media program targeting planners.
    - Distributed final meeting video to partners, on website and into media planner hubs on CVENT and Northstar and social
    - Updated meetings landing page content.
    - Added dedicated meeting pages supporting Tours for Groups and Teambuilding
    - Reviewing collateral for update to Meeting's brochure and incremental high impact placements during key meeting planner time frame in 3Q/4Q
- Finalized persona program to understand post-pandemic traveler – optimize media planning, retargeting and website with new insights. Developing personalization options into website for fully immersive experience based on key drivers learned from research insights.
- Finalized nature video posted online, in email and to partners, including America Beach Museum
- Ongoing review, development, and execution of content calendar and editorial strategy across all channels including blog, email, social media, and website promotions.
- Reviewing AR app for next phase over summer 2021
- Island Perks – tourism incentive program
    - Finalized amendment to contract for pilot program with Tremendous.
    - Finalized partner recruitment and onboarding for lodging partner offers
    - Finalized and printed Island Perk card holders
    - Developed new landing page on AI.com
    - Press release finalized
    - Launched in targeted and dedicated marketing
    - Hosted partner training Zoom
    - Ongoing maintenance as partners sell-out test allocations
- Management of tourism research
    - Working with RDS on calendar year report
    - Starting development of Year in Review collateral design
    - Working with economic development on unemployment data related to tourism industry
- Assisting County on environmental branding signage program, American Beach community plan and beach park planning
- Launched paid social and digital support of FRLA job fair and ongoing hospitality industry employment opportunities.

Website & Digital

- Ongoing work on database management and optimization – launched Welcome series to incorporate demographics and psychographics of existing base for further targeting. Initiated automated Welcome service into user experience to build on data collection and understand demographics and interests within our database loyalists. 100% response rate to welcome email program since launch in March 2021.
- Homepage design and redesigned global navigation launched across AmeliaIsland.com. Ongoing updates and reformatting into better user experience. Added Webcams page off global navigation for traveler's interested in beach views in planning. Redesign of Tour Guide pages and Photo and Video tour pages in design for June launch.
- Expanded and unified organization of key business and community partners within the website to better serve the broad scope of visitor engagements. Redefined categories for consistency and optimization of key business drivers around Beach, Outdoor Activities, Shop, Arts & Culture, Spa & Wellness and Sports & Recreation.
- Redefined Lodging categories for clarity to Resorts, Hotels & Motels, Bed & Breakfasts, Vacation Rentals and Camping. Revised Dining categories for better searchability to Fine Dining, Casual Dining, Breakfast & Coffee, Ice Cream & Desserts, International, Seafood and Bars & Breweries.
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- Added dedicated opt-in for Meeting Planner communications, designing communication strategy and database management plan for FY21 launch.
- Launched redesigned and updated Wedding dedicated pages to reach special events and wedding milestone travelers.
- Refined and redesigned Business Listing pages across existing categories and added new "Other" Category to host additional business – both venue and services – supporting Meetings/Special events and weddings. Ongoing input of partner data for consistent and broadened amenities to better serve vertical segments for over 300+ partners.
- Continuous update of Calendar of Events
- Managing ongoing editorial /content calendar for marketing efforts including blogs, emails, homepage promotional spaces on website, social.
- Blogs – Wedding Party Itinerary, There's more to Florida than Theme Parks – Why you must Visit Amelia Island, Celebrate Every Kind of Dad this Father's Day, Ice Cream Island.
- Launched email SEO and SEM optimization through blogs and email to better drive performance through paid search consisting of Pillar articles and Cluster blogs that target key words and phrases to drive SEO value in Google analytics. Built SEO dedicated long-format content to deliver SEO rich scoring by Google algorithm.
- Added Micro-Release articles into editorial calendar for use across owned media channels and PR.
- Regular status calls and program management with SilverTech.
- Ongoing optimization of landing page and email support around Social photo contest designed to encourage visitors to share their own photographs of memorable Amelia Island moments past and present. Goal is to generate broad library of imagery and loyalists. Leveraging partner participation in Monthly and Grand Prizes.
- Optimized interaction with email program, including co-op emails, by A/B testing of subject, use of emojis, video and animation.

- Reviewing digital tools to optimize video platforms including Vimeo, YouTube and Wistia for user experience as well as developing content strategy to keep library of materials and content current.
- Shifted search engine marketing efforts to Starmark; leveraging editorial strategy into blog communications to optimize SEO and SEM for leisure campaigns, Meetings and Weddings campaigns.
- Developed and updated new landing pages supporting FMLA job fair featuring 9 hospitality industry partners with direct links to open positions.
- Revised and built Amelia Island meeting planner hub microsites with curated content on CVENT, NorthStar prior to launch of messaging.
- Update and optimization of Visit Florida city pages and content in development.

Social Media

	FY21	QTR 1	QTR 2	MAY
Facebook	Fans	92,992	94,131	94,131
	Impressions	17,664,602	10,067,410	5,288,824
	Reach	12,842,708	6,310,771	3,255,064
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	Impressions	930,708	541,795	244,407
	Reach	721,155	384,331	132,218
	Engagements	27,714	10,283	5,962
Linked In	Fans	588	709	709
	Impressions	2,716	5,276	3,177
	Reach	2,505	3,294	1,984
	Engagements	248	207	102
Total	Fans	114,982	116,970	116,970
	Impressions	18,598,026	10,614,481	5,536,408
	Reach	13,566,368	6,698,396	3,474,956
	Engagements	53,989	22,275	12,137

Overview

- **Content focused on UGC and more memory contest options.**
- **Mother's Day and Concours were previewed throughout the month.**
- **Top engaging posts by channel:**

Facebook: UGC

Instagram: UGC Image

LinkedIn: Meetings Video

COVID-19 Response

- Amelia Island branded hand sanitizer stations ordered, arrived, installed.
- Updated ongoing changes related to COVID-19 consumer pages and managed TDC website for COVID-19 updates and resources
- Ongoing maintenance of consumer website on COVID-19 travel advisory page, homepage banner, homepage button, business status update page/chart.
- Ongoing communications of state and county executive orders to tourism industry partners as necessary.
- Working closely with tax collector office to facilitate communications to over 500 short term rental owners.
- Advocating to government officials on behalf in industry for crisis response programs from federal government
- Executed industry newsletters to tourism partners.
- Working with Nassau County CARES team execution of FRLA Seal of Commitment; submitted CARES application, coordinating communication, etc.

Film Commission

- Responding to Film Commission requests
    - National Geographic

Public Relations

Writers/Influencers

Note: Influencers/Writers stays mostly paused due to low room inventory at resorts and hotels.

- Planned and executed trip for Stephanie Craig / History Fan Girl for visit May 22-25 for a complete history angle. Blog and podcast incoming.
- Planned trip for Patricia Maristch/Preppy Publicist for visit May 24-27.
- Connected with Aubrey Jackson for potential shoulder season visit. TBD.
- Connected with Angie Orth / Angie Away for potential visit. There was a fee associated, so we decided to touch base again at the end of August.
- Connected with Ray Collins / Family Beautiful for potential visit. Determined he was not a good fit during high season and will circle back around.
- Connected with Ed and Jennifer Coleman for trip September 10 – 12. Waiting for form fill out.
- Connected with Claudia Zuniga / My Bucketlist Journeys. Determined she was not a good fit.
- Connected with Jill Becker for story review in NE Georgia Living magazine.
- Connected with freelancer Tim Ebner for potential visit. Trip pushed back to shoulder season.
- Connected with Marisa Langford for inclusion in Tampa Bay Parenting's June issue.
- Connected with Carolanne Roberts for holiday story with Southern Living.

- Followed up with Oneika Raymond / Oneika the Traveler visit from April 28 – May 1. Waiting final blog material.
- Arranged Concours d'Elegance interview opportunity with Florida Time-Union.

Press/Outreach

- Wrote press release for vaccine distribution at the Omni Amelia Island Resort and The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island. The release did not get distributed since the resorts decided to just keep it to staff and not open it up to hospitality community.
- Applied for VISIT FLORIDA Canada Virtual Media Mission. Amelia Island was not selected.
- Provided information to Northstar Travel on creative team building.
- Provided information to Skye Sherman / Travel + Leisure for story on Small Towns.
- Provided information to GoGlobeHopper for Top 10 list story.
- Provided information on unique restaurants to Wall Street Journal.

Communication

- Provided activity report.
- Participated on Starmark team calls.

Social Media

- Created and posted across social media platforms.
- Monitored social media platforms.
- Assisted with employment campaign when needed.
- Selected Amelia Island Memories contest winner.
- Had a touch base call with Falcon.io.
- Had touch base calls with CrowdRiff.
- Provided reports.

Promotional

- StyleBlueprint contacted us for a travel giveaway. We passed due to partner limitations / season.
- Followed up on a photoshoot with Cabana Life at the Omni Amelia Island Resort. Photoshoot was temporarily postponed and Omni could not accommodate the new dates.

- Wrapped up The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island on Women's Health Giveaway.
- Wheel of Fortune approached us about a giveaway. We passed due to partner limitations / season.

Misc.

- Updated growth trends/awards report with Nassau County.
- Worked with Nate on meeting sales retail refresher.
- Wrote and submitted Flagler Award for PR and social media.

Tourism Activity Report

June 2021

Mission Statement

Created by the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners in 1988, the Amelia Island Tourist Development Council (AITDC) oversees the development and marketing of Amelia Island as a world-class tourism destination. As provided by Florida law, the AITDC is responsible for the expenditure of revenues received from the levy and imposition of the tourism development tax.

The goals of the AITDC are to generate visitation to Amelia Island and its attractions/special events, thereby increasing tax revenues, including sales taxes and those imposed on the hospitality industry. In turn, those tax revenues may be used to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the community, provide support for beach re-nourishment, and ensure a viable hospitality industry.

The key focus areas of Amelia Island TDC are:

Events & Promotions:

- Visitor Services
- Monthly Meetings
- Travel & Trade
- Special Events

Marketing:

- Strategy
- Advertising
- Content/Social
- Website
- Collateral

Public Relations:

- Writers
- Coverage
- Press Releases
- Promotions

Events & Promotions

Visitor Services

- June collateral delivery - we delivered 54 cases of collateral to partners.
- June number of visitors – 2,742; number of bags prepared – 225 (Wedding/Group/Reunion)
- On-Going Operations: Prepare welcome packets for meetings and tours, check hotel availability, assist visitors with area information and direction to visitors, encouraging first-time and repeat visitation, assist with dining, and hotel reservations, encouraging first-time and repeat visitation. Displays and distributes information of potential interest to guests including lodging activities and events. Attends trade shows. Assist conference groups with area information when needed.

Collateral

- Mailed 481 Visitor Guides to fulfill online requests.
- Distributed 128 cases of collateral to tourism partners.
- Printed 5,000 each of new collateral - “Kids Bucket List”, “Rainy Day Activities”, and “Rental Lists” for Welcome Center and for accommodations to hand out as curated activities for guests across the island.
- Beach Brochure general content drafted and being reviewed by County and City for accuracy.
- Bike Map is next priority for updating.

Partner Relations

- Tourism Partner Bi-Weekly Newsletter continued
- Continue to meet with new and established partners to ensure they are getting the most out of AICVB resources.
- Added 4 additional business listings on AmeliaIsland.com. Identified 30 businesses that could be considered a tourism related partner to add to website after review.
- 13 Partners participating in the Island Perks Incentive card program, many sold out.
- Visit Florida business listings improvements. Merged Fernandina Beach listings into Amelia Island, audited listings for closures, updated photos and descriptions of listing we manage. Added beach parks to listing managed. Next steps is to encourage all partners to create or update their free or paid listing.
- KeyData was selected to provide Vacation Rental performance tracking and forecasting. 70% of professionally managed units verbally agreed to sign up for toll and reporting. Onboarding of partners started and full DMO dashboard will be available in the coming weeks.
- Added capabilities on AmeliaIslandTDC.com for partners to submit their upcoming specials and promos.

Monthly/Partnership Meetings

- Monthly Florida’s First Coast of Golf meeting
- Main Street board and organization meetings
- Regular calls with agencies: Silvertech, Hayworth, Starmark, My Agency
- Calls with Destinations International, Brand USA
- Amelia Island Partner meetings/calls/contact
- Discussions with new Commissioners
- BOCC Workshop

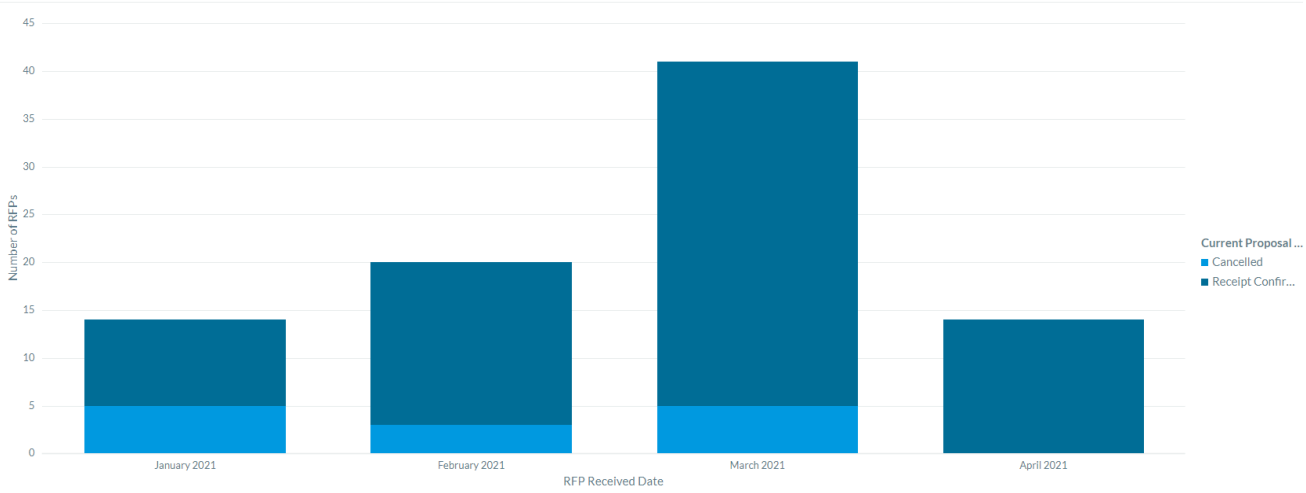
Travel Trade

- Various online webinars and virtual tradeshows gearing towards the travel trade industry.
- Attended Northstar Meetings Group – Incentive Live / GMID edition, Tucson AZ
- Global Meetings Industry Day 2021
- Return to Travel by AAA Virtual Tradeshow
- Northstar Meetings Group – IPEC, Louisville KY
- Ongoing work with Cvent and AmeliaIsland.com RFP’s
    - Incoming RFP’s continue to steadily roll in as a result of our ongoing meetings campaign.

Unique RFPs by Month

RFP Received Date	Meeting Space and Sleeping Rooms	Meeting Space Only	Sleeping Rooms Only	Totals
December 2020	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2
January 2021	22 (95.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (4.3%)	23
February 2021	20 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	20
March 2021	39 (95.1%)	1 (2.4%)	1 (2.4%)	41
April 2021	39 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	39
May 2021	31 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	31

RFPs by Proposal Status



- Ongoing Networking with MPI, FSAE, SITE, Destination International
- Ongoing networking with Meeting Planners via LinkedIn & phone calls
- Management of the Flights for Sites program
- Developing new meeting focused/group marketing collateral with partner agency, Starmark
- Tradeshow forecasting for remaining FY21 & FY22.

- Ongoing partnership discussions with Destination Management Companies, exploring sponsorship opportunities.
    - Ethos Event Collective
        - Co-sponsoring upcoming IRF to include gift on transportation, video play, and two attendance spots.
    - Imprint Events Group, DMC
- Planning for Incentive Research Foundation Educational Forum attendance in June

Special Events

- Dickens on Centre & Holiday Lighting – continued planning
    - Site visits with COFB for holiday lighting
    - Vendor calls for clarification of RFP needs.
    - Draft of DOC Event Safety Plan initiated
    - Presented plans to COFB Special Events Committee for approval – Permit Approved.
- Concours Week event outreach to partners for 2021 plans based on AICDE date change to May: Finalized communications and promotion plan and shared with partner.

Marketing

Operations

- Ongoing work on PO requisitions, tracking, invoice processing, P&P review, etc.
- Destinations International DMAP accreditation 4-year renewal application in progress
- Ongoing updates to digital signage system in Welcome Center using in-house management platform OptiSigns.
- Ongoing work on FY20 budgeting and forecasting details for FY21 budgets based on revised TDT collections and plans.
- Submitted initial FY22 budget with coding and rationale for approval.
- Pending policy and procedures with County
- Continuous management of the CARES Grant with Nassau County, coordinating between FRLA, partners, and County; Application process; submitting final backup documentation for billing.
- Updated crisis plan with new contact info.

Strategy

- Continuous execution and oversight of annual marketing plan
- Media planning & execution –
    - FY21Q3 media plan monitoring and optimization across digital and social channels.
        - Approved creative executions for media program rollouts – updating creative for SEM, social and niche marketing.
        - Refreshed leisure social marketing executions to avoid wear out.
    - Working with Starmark on Q4 media plans
        - Submitted County paperwork for 3Q and 4Q budget

- Planning internal CVB media buys to boost ongoing recovery efforts; focus on vacation rental, golf, weddings, as targeted extension of brand campaign.
- Dedicated Meetings support launched and ongoing via digital media and e-marketing. Website redesign, expansion, and optimization ongoing.
- Finalized partner co-op programs; IOs for publishers; final contracts with partners, for external publishers as well as AICVB dedicated e-mail marketing program.
- Finalized cooperative program with Florida's First Coast of Golf
- Continuous review, optimization, and execution of Marketing Dashboard for content, blog and email messaging including SEM strategy.
- Ongoing work with Starmark on creative development and media including extensions of Moments campaign for weddings leveraging partner content.
- Meetings program creative development:
- Finalized meetings campaign including media program targeting planners.
- Distributed final meeting video to partners, on website and into media planner hubs on CVENT and Northstar and social
- Updated meetings landing page content.
- Added dedicated meeting pages supporting Tours for Groups and Teambuilding
- Reviewing collateral for update to Meeting's brochure and incremental high impact placements during key meeting planner time frame in 3Q/4Q
- Finalized persona program to understand post-pandemic traveler – optimize media planning, retargeting and website with new insights. Developing personalization options into website for fully immersive experience based on key drivers learned from research insights.
- Finalized nature video posted online, in email and to partners, including America Beach Museum
- Ongoing review, development, and execution of content calendar and editorial strategy across all channels including blog, email, social media, and website promotions.
- Reviewing AR app for next phase over summer 2021
- Island Perks – tourism incentive program
- Finalized amendment to contract for pilot program with Tremendous.
- Finalized partner recruitment and onboarding for lodging partner offers
- Finalized and printed Island Perk card holders
- Developed new landing page on AI.com
- Press release finalized
- Launched in targeted and dedicated marketing
- Hosted partner training Zoom
- Ongoing maintenance as partners sell-out test allocations
- Management of tourism research
- Working with RDS on calendar year report
- Starting development of Year in Review collateral design
- Working with economic development on unemployment data related to tourism industry
- Assisting County on environmental branding signage program, American Beach community plan and beach park planning
- Launched paid social and digital support of FRLA job fair and ongoing hospitality industry employment opportunities.

Website & Digital

- Ongoing work on database management and optimization – launched Welcome series to incorporate demographics and psychographics of existing base for further targeting. Initiated automated Welcome service into user experience to build on data collection and understand demographics and interests within our database loyalists. 100% response rate to welcome email program since launch in March 2021.
- Homepage design and redesigned global navigation launched across AmeliaIsland.com. Ongoing updates and reformatting into better user experience. Added Webcams page off global navigation for traveler's interested in beach views in planning. Redesign of Tour Guide pages and Photo and Video tour pages in design for June launch.
- Expanded and unified organization of key business and community partners within the website to better serve the broad scope of visitor engagements. Redefined categories for consistency and optimization of key business drivers around Beach, Outdoor Activities, Shop, Arts & Culture, Spa & Wellness and Sports & Recreation.
- Redefined Lodging categories for clarity to Resorts, Hotels & Motels, Bed & Breakfasts, Vacation Rentals and Camping. Revised Dining categories for better searchability to Fine Dining, Casual Dining, Breakfast & Coffee, Ice Cream & Desserts, International, Seafood and Bars & Breweries.
- Broad expansion of over 15 dedicated Meetings pages including reorganization targeted to Meeting Planner needs, expanded information and redesign of communications aimed to drive Meeting business across the island.
- Added dedicated opt-in for Meeting Planner communications, designing communication strategy and database management plan for FY21 launch.
- Launched redesigned and updated Wedding dedicated pages to reach special events and wedding milestone travelers.
- Refined and redesigned Business Listing pages across existing categories and added new "Other" Category to host additional business – both venue and services – supporting Meetings/Special events and weddings. Ongoing input of partner data for consistent and broadened amenities to better serve vertical segments for over 300+ partners. Uploaded +20 additional business listings in support services.
- Continuous update of Calendar of Events
- Managing ongoing editorial /content calendar for marketing efforts including blogs, emails, homepage promotional spaces on website, social.
- Blogs – Rest & Recreation: Amelia Island Activities for your Luxury Getaway; What's Happening July 4th; Guide to Staying on Main Beach on Amelia Island.
- Launched email SEO and SEM optimization through blogs and email to better drive performance through paid search consisting of Pillar articles and Cluster blogs that target key words and phrases to drive SEO value in Google analytics. Built SEO dedicated long-format content to deliver SEO rich scoring by Google algorithm.
- Added Micro-Release articles into editorial calendar for use across owned media channels and PR.
- Regular status calls and program management with SilverTech.
- Ongoing optimization of landing page and email support around Social photo contest designed to encourage visitors to share their own photographs of memorable Amelia Island moments past and present. Goal is to generate broad library of imagery and loyalists. Leveraging partner participation in Monthly and Grand Prizes.
- Optimized interaction with email program, including co-op emails, by A/B testing of subject, use of emojis, video and animation.

- Reviewing digital tools to optimize video platforms including Vimeo, YouTube and Wistia for user experience as well as developing content strategy to keep library of materials and content current.
- Shifted search engine marketing efforts to Starmark; leveraging editorial strategy into blog communications to optimize SEO and SEM for leisure campaigns, Meetings and Weddings campaigns.
- Developed and updated new landing pages supporting FMLA job fair featuring 9 hospitality industry partners with direct links to open positions.
- Revised and built Amelia Island meeting planner hub microsites with curated content on CVENT, NorthStar prior to launch of messaging.
- Updated and optimized Visit Florida city pages and content. Focused listing to one cohesive Amelia Island destination listing from split listing previously. Revised images for impact, updated offers, events and business listings.
- Created new webcam, awards and accolades and newsletter pages to fulfill key communications in marketing plans.
- Relaunched Video Tour and Photo Tour pages with embed technology to better serve the visitor experience and support businesses with location and CTA tagging of photos.

Social Media

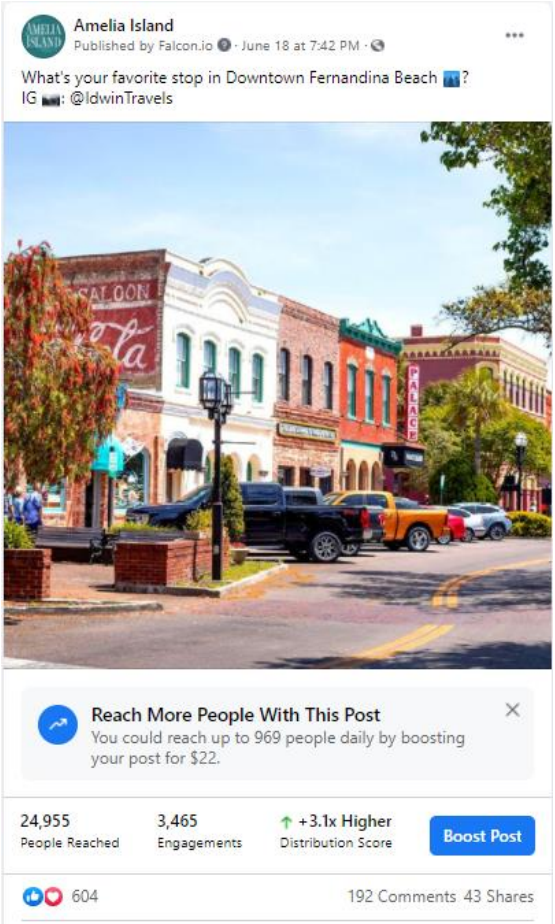
	FY21	QTR 1	QTR 2	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	QTR 3
Facebook	Fans	91,527	92,992	93,631	94,131	94,645	+3,118
	Impressions	15,755,663	17,664,602	4,778,586	5,288,824	4,993,822	15,061,232
	Reach	10,956,288	12,842,708	3,055,707	3,255,064	2,927,516	9,238,287
	Engagements	24,250	26,027	5,712	6,073	5,652	17,437
Instagram	Fans	20,018	21,402	21,770	22,130	22,471	+2,453
	Impressions	802,520	930,708	193,351	244,407	202,901	640,659
	Reach	574,284	721,155	145,351	132,218	128,624	406,937
	Engagements	19,733	27,714	6,050	5,962	6,538	18,665
Linked In	Fans	344	588	665	709	733	+389
	Impressions	4,371	2,716	2,099	3,177	2,465	7,741
	Reach	2,505	2,505	1,310	1,984	1,494	4,788
	Engagements	184	248	105	102	80	287
Total	Fans	111,889	114,982	116,066	116,970	117,849	+5,960
	Impressions	16,562,554	18,598,026	9,558,519	5,536,408	5,199,188	15,709,632
	Reach	11,533,077	13,566,368	3,474,956	3,474,956	3,057,634	9,650,012
	Engagements	30,161	53,989	11,777	12,137	12,270	36,389

Overview

- Content focused on UGC and more memory contest options.
- Father's Day, history and nature were the topic focus's throughout the month.
- YTD fan growth surpassed 5k this quarter.

- Short pause in paid social ads (due to high forecast in occupancy for June) attributed to the small decline in all numbers for Q3.
- Began organizing content strategy for fall promotions and special events.
- Top engaging posts by channel for June:

Facebook:



LinkedIn:

Instagram:

COVID-19 Response

- Amelia Island branded hand sanitizer stations ordered, arrived, installed.
- Updated ongoing changes related to COVID-19 consumer pages and managed TDC website for COVID-19 updates and resources
- Ongoing maintenance of consumer website on COVID-19 travel advisory page, homepage banner, homepage button, business status update page/chart.
- Ongoing communications of state and county executive orders to tourism industry partners as necessary.
- Working closely with tax collector office to facilitate communications to over 500 short term rental owners.
- Advocating to government officials on behalf in industry for crisis response programs from federal government
- Executed industry newsletters to tourism partners.
- Working with Nassau County CARES team execution of FRLA Seal of Commitment; submitted CARES application, coordinating communication, etc.

Film Commission

- Responding to Film Commission requests
  - National Geographic

Public Relations

Writers/Influencers

- Connected with Aubrey Jackson for potential shoulder season visit. TBD.
- Connected with Ed and Jennifer Coleman for trip September 10 – 12. Waiting for form fill out.
- Connected with Jeff White from Go GlobeHopper for story features.

- Connected with Jill Becker for story review in NE Georgia Living magazine. Story published in June.
- Connected with Andrea Rotondo, The Points Guy for images.
- Connected with Jess Ducos, Miami Mom Collective for weekend getaways story.
- Connected with Allison Tibaldi, USA Today for naturalists feature.
- Connected with Diversify VanLife for potential visit, focusing on RV Travel.
- Connect with Ella, Global One Magazine for potential visit. Passed on opportunity.
- Connected with Katie McElveen on story featured in several city newspapers on Amelia Island.
- Reconnected with Jami Ray, 30A Mama, on potential visit. TBD on timing.
- Reconnected with Guiomar Ochoa, Hungry Traveler for a potential visit. TBD.
- Planned trip with VISIT FLORIDA for Tiffany Nguyen (@tiffpenguin) for trip June 14-17.
- Planned meals and activity for Jamie Huffman, Charleston Blonde for trip with Marriott properties June 10 – 13.
- Followed up with Jasmin Lankford, AAA visit and video for some additional b-roll for internal use.
- Followed up with Oneika Raymond / Oneika the Traveler visit from April 28 – May 1. Waiting final blog material.
- Followed up with Stephanie Craig / History Fan Girl for visit May 22-25 for a complete history angle. Blog and podcast incoming.

Press/Outreach

- Wrote and distributed release on economic impact of Concours Week and Memorial Day weekend. Distributed to local and trade.
- Wrote microblog for fishing in the summer.
- Provided information to USA Today on The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island Ecology Field Trip.
- Provided information to Famadillo on girlfriend's getaway.
- Forwarded request from Stateline to Nassau County to comment on driving on the beach.

Communication

- Provided activity report.
- Participated on Starmark team calls.
- Followed up with Chadd Scott for podcast updates.
- Shared Made in the South information with relevant CPG partners.

Social Media

- Created and posted across social media platforms.
- Monitored social media platforms.
- Selected Amelia Island Memories contest winner.
- Provided reports.

Promotional

- Wrapped up The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island on Women's Health Giveaway.
- Connected with SET Toyota for FL/GA Game Giveaway. Waiting for response from Marriott team.

Misc.

- Updated growth trends/awards report with Nassau County
- Worked with Nate on meeting sales retail refresher.
- Wrote and submitted Flagler Award for PR and social media.
- Provided Holly Coyle, Nassau County with information for the Growth Trends Report.
- Provided information for quarterly meeting.

4. Hayworth Publicity Reports (April – June)

HAYWORTH PR

Publicity Report

April 2021

AMELIA ISLAND

COME MAKE MEMORIES®

Summary

Total Mentions: 50

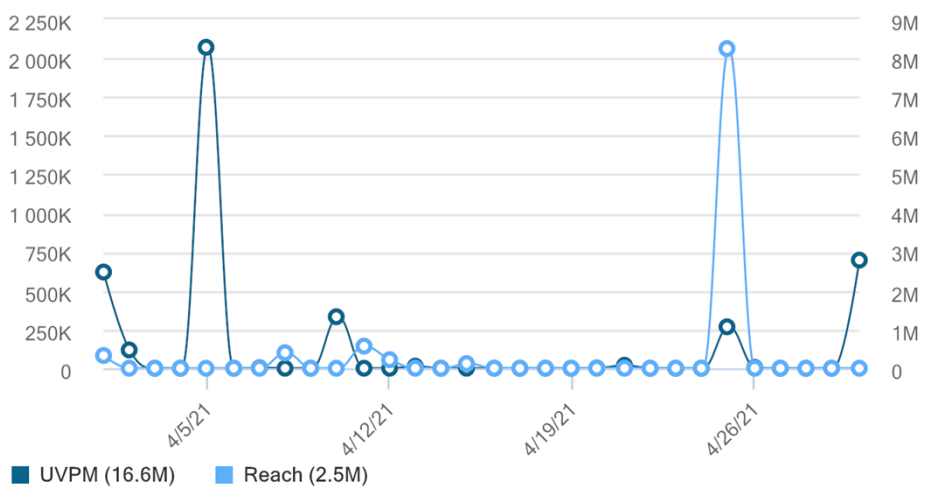
Total Reach: 19.1M

Coverage Summary

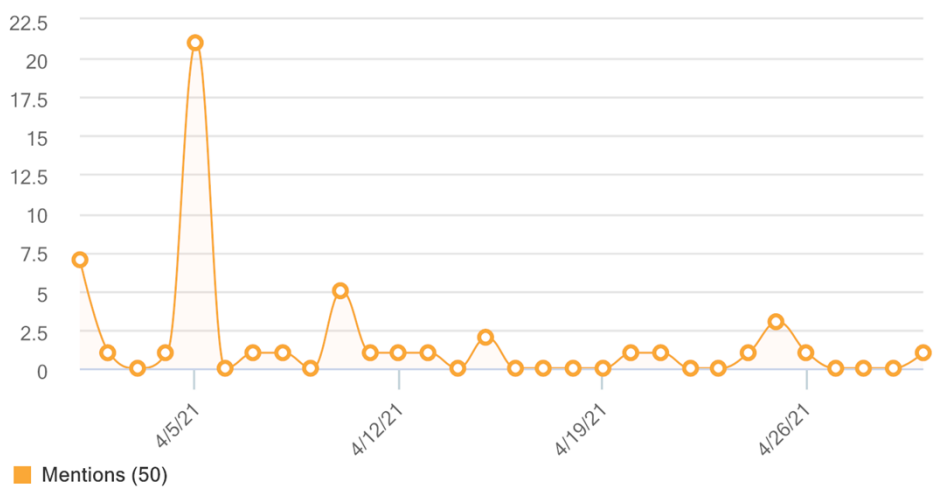
Top Articles

HEADLINES	OUTLET	REACH
Saddle Up! These Are the Best Scenic Horseback-Riding Adventures Across the Country	Martha Stewart Living Online	2,790,599
This spot in the Florida Keys was just named one of the best coastal cities in America	Miami Herald Online, The	2,417,993
We've got a beach for that: vacations in Florida	Miami Herald Online, The	2,417,993
Saddle Up	Martha Stewart Living	2,062,321
We've got a beach for that: vacations in Florida	Sacramento Bee Online, The	1,269,434
We've got a beach for that: vacations in Florida	Charlotte Observer Online, The	1,071,773
The Best U.S. Islands: 2020 Readers' Choice Awards	Condé Nast Traveler Online	1,069,148
We've got a beach for that: Vacations in Florida	Tulsa World Online	958,008
We've got a beach for that: vacations in Florida	Kansas City Star Online, The	815,892
Weekend Getaways Near Gainesville	Her Campus	471,717
We've got a beach for that: vacations in Florida	State Online, The	386,319
We've got a beach for that: vacations in Florida	News Tribune Online, The	342,991
We've got a beach for that: vacations in Florida	Fresno Bee Online, The	309,730
We've got a beach for that: Vacations in Florida	Times of Northwest Indiana Online, The	255,598
We've got a beach for that: vacations in Florida	Idaho Statesman Online	212,541
We've got a beach for that: vacations in Florida | Macon Telegraph	Telegraph Online	177,707
We've got a beach for that: vacations in Florida	Wichita Eagle Online/Kansas.com, The	168,590

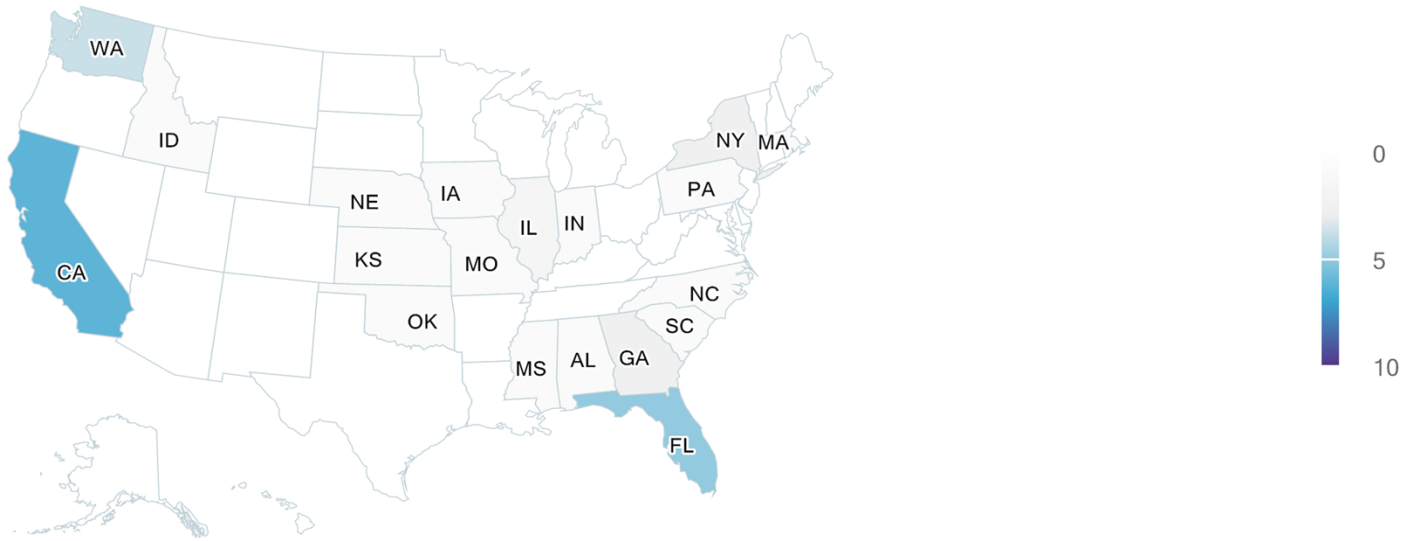
Reach



Total Mentions



Mentions by Location



Prominent Terms

dual-brand salt planned courtyard marriott school hoyt a-amelia z-zepher hotels may around 30++ summer cooking
leave vacations fort years explore islands trips visit country rocket aurora
dawna win 2021 saddle scenic cooks
casey coast
paradise couples nights ritz-carlton beach giveaway amelia
gulf
nearby nokomis island launch
great
best
spring romantic night florida state resorts
north across two key hills atlantic
awards mom beaches u.s girls
choice break beyond
to... active getaways good clinch park ritz
warning far
fla.located 2020 horseback-riding girl vacation fitness stay zepher
destinations places adventures planners whole time
edging readers northeast house2109 resort moore/courtesy opening continental
checkout

Saddle Up! These Are the Best Scenic Horseback-Riding Adventures Across the Country

For unbridled fun, book an equestrian outing and get back into nature.

By **Erica Sloan** | April 30, 2021

To fans of all things equine, May is synonymous with horserace season thanks to both the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness Stakes. But if you'll be leaving your wide-brimmed, feathered hat hung this year in search of more socially distanced activities, there are still plenty of ways to get into the equestrian spirit. You can find fresh perspective—and get some welcome fresh air, too—by saddling up yourself at a scenic spot offering guided horseback rides (no prior experience required).

We've rounded up the top locales around the country where you can take the reins and trek through backcountry trails, along sandy beaches, across grassy meadows, and more:

Amelia Island, Florida

On a beachside jaunt with Amelia Island Horseback Riding, you'll ride high (and dry) above the ocean's edge—a prime vantage point for spotting dolphins, known to catch air close to shore (from $100 per hour). If you're lucky, you could even spot a Right Whale, an endangered species that lives off the northeast coast of Florida, enjoying the area's warmer waters. To make your experience that much more special, book an early-morning ride (from $150), and you'll clip-clop along the shoreline in almost complete privacy with a perfect view of the sun rising over the horizon.

Benton City, Washington

Saunter through the sun-dappled vineyards of this quiet wine region on horseback with Red Mountain Trails (from $70 per hour). Add a wine flight to your ride (for an extra $15), and after you dismount, you'll head to the pavilion to sip and sample four local vinos selected for their seasonal availability (a few days prior to the tour, you'll have the chance to choose from the current menu). You can also add on a fire pit for your group to gather 'round post-trot (for an additional $10)—just be sure to pack a bag of marshmallows to make the most of it.

Estes Park, Colorado

Take in the majestic Rocky Mountains from a whole new level with Sombrero Stables, which shares its Estes Park ranch land with the newly built Mustang Mountain Coaster. Most of its horseback rides happen on public lands by way of a permit with the National Park Services, and the company tour guides take special care to ensure they always leave them just how they found them. 30-minute, hour-long, and two-hour-long rides are available (at $40, $70, and $90 per person, respectively), with the longest option climbing up to 900 feet in elevation for panoramic views of the Continental Divide, Long's Peak, and the Estes Valley.

OTHER MEREDITH SITES

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HAYWORTH PR

WHERE TO STAY

This spot in the Florida Keys was just named one of the best coastal cities in America

BY CONNIE OGLE
FEBRUARY 26, 2021 10:32 AM, UPDATED MARCH 02, 2021 10:32 AM

The Florida Keys are famous for beaches, fishing and great weather. Here's what you need to know about one of the country's top tourism destinations. BY DANIEL A. VARELA

Everybody loves the Florida Keys.

Especially Key West, which international travel website Big 7 Travel placed in one of the top 10 spots on its annual 50 Best Coastal Towns in the United States report.

Miami made the cut, too. But Key West, which was no. 6, really captured the imagination of Big 7 Travel, which considered such factors as beach amenities, natural scenery, community atmosphere, food and drink scene and activities.

“Many consider Key West to be the best beach area in the States,” Big 7 Travel writes. “And they aren’t wrong. Countless pastel colored homes, a robust vacation atmosphere, incredible seafood and the most gorgeous beaches in Florida definitely back up the claim. Then, below the water, you’ve got incredible vibrant coral perfect for scuba diving and crystal clear waves perfect for wading the day away. It truly is paradise on earth.” [Note: we do know that Key West isn’t exactly overrun with sweeping beaches, but let’s not ruin Big Travel 7’s dreams.]

In 2020, Key West was also named one of the best places in the country to buy a vacation home by vacation rental management platform Vacasa. Big 7 Travel also called the Overseas Highway one of the most scenic drives in the U.S.

The writers of the Best Coastal Cities report concede that Miami, no. 28 on the list, is not exactly a "cozy beach town" but couldn't ignore its glitzy appeal:

"This vibrant Floridian hub is loaded with culture and celebrates its diversity through food, art and entertainment. From the luxury resort hotels and fine dining spots to the cozy hole in the walls and boutique inns, Miami is a little bit of everything. And if that weren't enough, the beaches are pristine and the nightlife is among the best in the country."

We aren't so sure about the pristine part because South Beach exists, but we'll take the compliment.

The best coastal beach town in the U.S. was Carmel-by-the-Sea in California, with Nantucket, Massachusetts; Narragansett, Rhode Island; Cape May, New Jersey and Santa Barbara, California rounding out the top 5.

Three other Florida cities were mentioned: Amelia Island (no. 25); Clearwater (30); and Anna Maria Island (44). No mention of St. Pete Beach, which was just named the best beach in the United States by Tripadvisor's 2021 Travelers' Choice Awards.

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SPOTLIGHT

We've got a beach for that: Vacations in Florida

Cassie Armstrong, Orlando Sentinel Apr 10, 2021

With 1,350 miles of coastline, Florida certainly has a stretch of sandy shores suited for every beach passion, whether it's hanging 10 on a surfboard, peering at underwater wonders while snorkeling, searching the low tide for the perfect seashell or enjoying a day of tranquil peace on a patch of secluded sand.

From the Florida Keys to the Panhandle, the Sunshine State certainly has a beach for everyone.

Best Surfing Beach: Palm Beach's Reef Road

Reef Road in West Palm Beach's glitziest neighborhood is one of the few places in the state where the surf can achieve true "big wave" status. The area has beautiful beaches, crystal clear waters and warm temperatures, which make for epic conditions when cold fronts roll through.

If you go: The break is located in a residential area on the north end of the county's priciest slab of real estate. There's no public parking within two miles of the spot — and there is a very active police force.

Runners-up: New Smyrna Beach and Sebastian Inlet

Best Beach for Shark's Teeth: Caspersen Beach in Venice

Beachcombers know the Gulf beaches in and around Southwest Florida are the best places to search for prehistoric shark's teeth. Caspersen Beach in Venice is an exceptionally fine spot — and a good shelling beach too. Walk along the shoreline and look for the shiny black fossils as they roll onto the shore with the tide. Or purchase a "Venice Snow Shovel," a screened basket fitted onto a long handle, and wade out a few feet into the water to scoop up your treasures. Most shark teeth found near the shore are 1/8-inch to 3/4-inch or even a bit larger.

If you go: 4100 Harbor Drive in Venice; visitsarasota.com/beaches/caspersen-beach

Runners-up: Casey Key in Nokomis and Fort Clinch State Park beaches on Amelia Island

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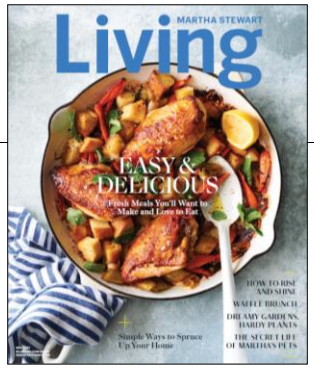


Out & About

WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO SEE, AND FOUR-LEGGED WAYS TO ENJOY WARMER DAYS

| ON THE ROAD |

SADDLE UP

Find fresh perspective atop a horse while taking in the gorgeous scenery. At **Tanque Verde Ranch**, in Tucson, Arizona (shown), you can amble past soaring saguaro and prickly-pear cacti, or catch some western spirit in the Harmony With Horses workshop, which teaches classic wrangling techniques (*tanqueverderanch.com*). Here, three more spots to grab the reins.

COURTESY OF TANQUE VERDE RANCH (HORSES); COURTESY OF PUBLISHERS (BOOKS)

BENTON CITY, WASH.

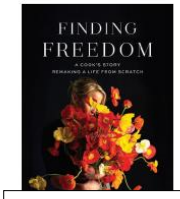
Saunter through the sun-dappled vineyards of this quiet wine region with Red Mountain Trails. Opt for the tasting tour, and you'll dismount midway through for sips and snacks. ***redmountaintrails.com***

AMELIA ISLAND, FLA.

On a jaunt with Amelia Island Horseback Riding, you'll ride high (and dry) above the ocean's edge—a prime vantage point for spotting dolphins, which are known to catch air close to shore. ***ameliaislandhorsebackriding.com***

LEXINGTON, KY.

Trot over grassy knolls on a guided tour at Kentucky Horse Park, then head to the Hall of Champions to admire retired star thoroughbreds in daily meet-and-greets. ***kyhorsepark.com***



| ON OUR BOOKSHELF |

After the 2013 collapse of Bangladesh's Rana Pl
artist Katrina Rodabaugh went on a fashion fas
including top-notch tools like the Clover Chaco ch
Great Circle (Knopf), is named after a flight that
are just as epic: One follows a daredevil female fl
lious actress playing her in a modern biopic. In ***Fi***
French's memoir, the peppery nasturtiums on her
It tells how she lost it all, time and again, only t
Acquisitions (Putnam), former *New York Times* j
beat, is a reception-worthy buffet of juicy backst

| WHY NOT? |

Ruff It

Get a jump on the dog days of summer at a canine-friendly beach.

Atlantic Beach
See Spot splash his reflection in the crystalline waters at this **Bogue Banks, North Carolina,** destination. He can air-dry on a leashed walk along nearby Elliott Coues Nature Trail, which traverses dunes and a maritime forest.

—

Huntington Dog Beach
Treat your pal to a dream playdate at this specially designated pooch paradise in **Huntington Beach, California.** Afterward, sit and stay at the Park Bench Café; its pet menu offers bite-size hot dogs.

—

South Padre Island
Pups can explore 30-plus miles of shoreline at this **Texas** locale—and ride the waves, too: South Padre Surf Company's golden retriever, Archer, will happily hang

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AMELIA ISLAND, FLA.

On a jaunt with Amelia Island Horseback Riding, you'll ride high (and dry) above the ocean's edge—a prime vantage point for spotting dolphins, which are known to catch air close to shore.
ameliaislandhorsebackriding.com

HAYWORTH PR

READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

The Best U.S. Islands: 2020 Readers' Choice Awards

The places that stayed with you in a year when travel may have been out of reach.

BY CAITLIN MORTON
October 6, 2020

Think you have to head to the Caribbean for an island getaway? Not necessarily. *Condé Nast Traveler* readers have called out their favorite U.S. islands, with winners from Hawaii to the Lowcountry (and even a northerner and midwesterner or two) this year. For our 33rd annual Readers' Choice Awards survey—yes, more than three decades—a record 600,000 registered voters weighed in. The impressive number of 2020 results were especially exciting for us. We're ever curious about where you go, what you loved, and who you went with. As you continue to travel, we continue to listen: Here are the U.S. islands that you loved most this year.

Dawna Moore/Courtesy Hoyt House

9. Amelia Island, Fla.

Located just off the coast of northeast Florida, Amelia Island mixes the moss-draped romance of the South with the state's renowned beaches and wildlife. No fewer than eight different flags have graced her blue skies over the last half-century—the French, Spanish, and even Mexican Rebels have all staked their claim—resulting in an eclectic history, culture, and, of course, food.

Pro tip: Stay at one of the island's many storied bed and breakfasts, like The Fairbanks House or Hoyt House.

Getting there: Amelia Island is a 30-minute drive from Jacksonville International Airport (JAX).

Condé Nast Traveler

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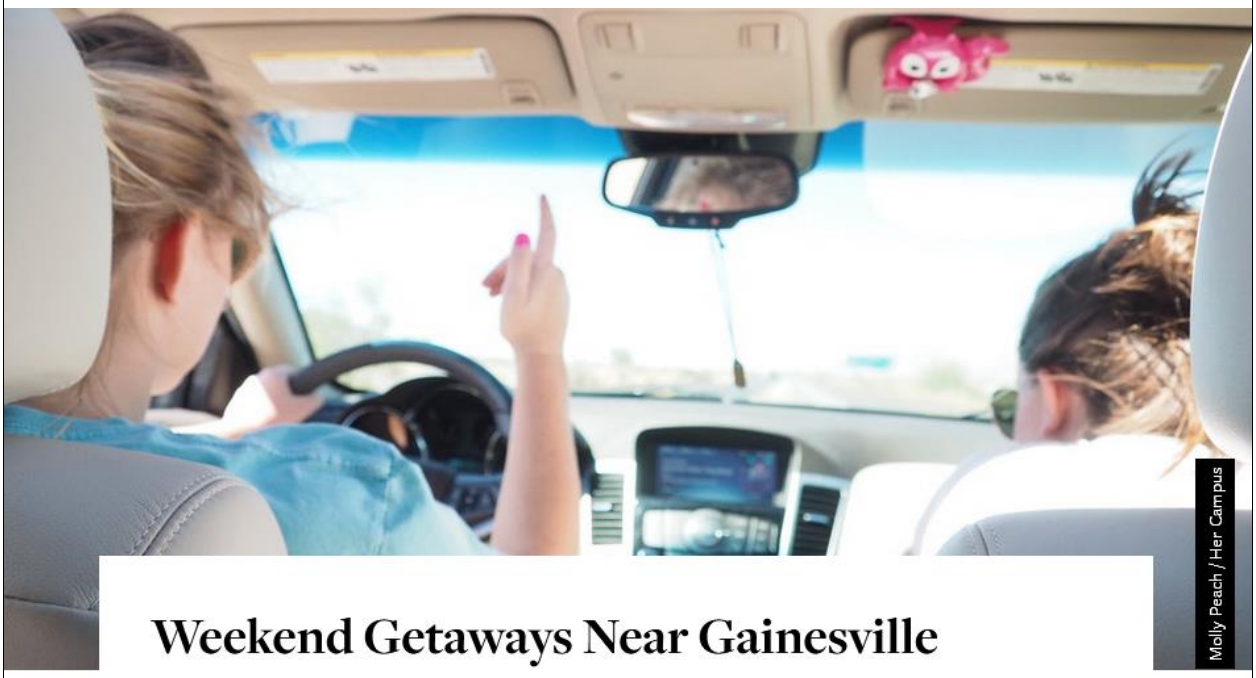

Molly Peach / Her Campus

Weekend Getaways Near Gainesville

By **Jolie Freedman • UFL Contributor • Lifestyle**
April 2, 2021 at 9:15am

During a time of uncertainty and unpredictability, it's easy to fall into the laziness trap. In other words, during this pandemic, it's common for people to feel down on themselves. Some begin the pattern of staying in bed for hours too long while also losing track of how many episodes of Netflix they've consumed. In my opinion, the hardest part is staying put in one place. After quarantine in my house for months on end, all I wanted was to go back to Gainesville. However, as much as I am thrilled to be back in the 352, it can grow difficult to remain in one town for an extended period of time. Luckily, Gainesville is located in a state filled with plenty of tourist attractions. As much as it seems easier to just hang out around school, making small weekend getaways can definitely improve your college semester. Here are a few places definitely worth the drive.

1. Amelia Island

Only an hour and a half away from Gainesville, Amelia Island makes for the perfect weekend vacation. Who doesn't love a small town with a beautiful beach? All you need is a method of transportation and a bottle of sunscreen to enjoy a quick stay at this island. After a stressful week of exams, this trip could be the perfect study break you didn't know you needed.

2. *Disney World/Disney Springs*

If you grew up wishing you were the kid who got to draw the Disney logo with a magic wand during commercials like me, then you probably are still a kid at heart who can't resist a trip to Disney World. As much as Disney World is known for its unique contraptions, magnificent characters and thrill-seeking rides, Disney Springs is such a hidden gem. Filled with many delicious restaurants and scenic stores to choose from, exploring Disney Springs on a trip to Orlando is the perfect break.

3. *Universal Studios*

Speaking of rides, Universal Studios should definitely be next on your weekend getaway bucket list. If you love a good stomach-dropping rollercoaster like me, sitting front row on the Hulk is an absolute must because nothing quite compares to that out-of-nowhere lunge forward. Aside from the roller coasters and other rides, Universal is known for CityWalk, which is an area filled with shops, restaurants and family sites. If you aren't a big ride-goer, then CityWalk is the tourist attraction for you.

4. *Tampa*

In general, the city of Tampa is a must-see. A personal favorite stop in Tampa for me is Amalie Arena, where many well-known performers come for concerts. Once, I took a quick pit stop here to see the Chainsmokers, which is something I will never forget.

If you are looking for a way to de-stress and enjoy yourself, any of these short-distance trips will make for the perfect weekend getaway.

9 Lansdowne St / Suite 2 / Boston, MA 02215 / info@hercampus.com

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SPOTLIGHT

We've got a beach for that: Vacations in Florida

Cassie Armstrong, Orlando Sentinel Apr 10, 2021

With 1,350 miles of coastline, Florida certainly has a stretch of sandy shores suited for every beach passion, whether it's hanging 10 on a surfboard, peering at underwater wonders while snorkeling, searching the low tide for the perfect seashell or enjoying a day of tranquil peace on a patch of secluded sand.

From the Florida Keys to the Panhandle, the Sunshine State certainly has a beach for everyone.

Best Surfing Beach: Palm Beach's Reef Road

Reef Road in West Palm Beach's glitziest neighborhood is one of the few places in the state where the surf can achieve true "big wave" status. The area has beautiful beaches, crystal clear waters and warm temperatures, which make for epic conditions when cold fronts roll through.

If you go: The break is located in a residential area on the north end of the county's priciest slab of real estate. There's no public parking within two miles of the spot — and there is a very active police force.

Runners-up: New Smyrna Beach and Sebastian Inlet

Best Beach for Shark's Teeth: Caspersen Beach in Venice

Beachcombers know the Gulf beaches in and around Southwest Florida are the best places to search for prehistoric shark's teeth. Caspersen Beach in Venice is an exceptionally fine spot — and a good shelling beach too. Walk along the shoreline and look for the shiny black fossils as they roll onto the shore with the tide. Or purchase a "Venice Snow Shovel," a screened basket fitted onto a long handle, and wade out a few feet into the water to scoop up your treasures. Most shark teeth found near the shore are 1/8-inch to 3/4-inch or even a bit larger.

If you go: 4100 Harbor Drive in Venice; **visitsarasota.com/beaches/caspersen-beach**

Runners-up: Casey Key in Nokomis and Fort Clinch State Park beaches on Amelia Island

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

SOUTHEAST

Florida: They have a beach for that

John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park is known for its excellent snorkeling. The park is open from 8 a.m. until sundown, 365 days a year. JOE BURBANK/ORLANDO SENTINEL/TNS

All sandy shores are not alike. Find the best for you.

By Cassie Armstrong
Orlando Sentinel

ORLANDO, Fla. – With 1,350 miles of coastline, Florida certainly has a stretch of sandy shores suited for every beach passion, whether it's hanging 10 on a surfboard, peering at underwater wonders while snorkeling, searching the low tide for the perfect seashell or enjoying a day of tranquil peace on a patch of secluded sand.

From the Florida Keys to the Panhandle, the Sunshine State certainly has a beach for everyone.

Best surfing beach

Palm Beach's Reef Road in West Palm Beach's glitziest neighborhood is one of the few places in the state where the surf can achieve true "big wave" status. The area has beautiful beaches, crystal clear waters and warm temperatures, which make for epic conditions when cold fronts roll through.

If you go: The break is located in a residential area on the north end of the county's priciest slab of real estate. There's no public parking within two miles of the spot – and there is a very active police force.

Runners-up: New Smyrna Beach and Sebastian Inlet

Best snorkeling/ scuba diving beach

Whether you want to admire colorful coral reef or the iconic Christ of the Abyss statue (donated to the park in 1966) submerged in the clear waters off Key Largo, **John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park** is a must-see. The park covers 70 nautical square miles and, opening in 1963, was the first underwater park in the United States. Personal or group in-water guides are available upon request for $45, plus tax. Each additional snorkeler (guided) is $15, plus tax.

Park admission: $8 per vehicle, plus 50 cents per person

If you go: 102601 Overseas Highway in Key Largo; 305-451-6300; floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/john-pennekamp-coral-reef-state-park

Runners-up: Bathtub Reef Park in Stuart and Point of Rocks on Siesta Key

Best beach for shark's teeth

Beachcombers know the Gulf beaches in and around Southwest Florida are the best places to search for prehistoric shark's teeth. **Caspersen Beach in Venice** is an exceptionally fine spot – and a good shelling beach too. Walk along the shoreline and look for the shiny black fossils as they roll onto the shore with the tide. Or purchase a "Venice Snow Shovel," a screened basket fitted onto a long handle, and wade out a few feet into the water to scoop up your treasures. Most shark teeth found near the shore are 1/8-inch to 3/4-inch or even a bit larger.

If you go: 4100 Harbor Drive in Venice; visitsarasota.com/beaches/caspersen-beach

Runners-up: Casey Key in Nokomis and Fort Clinch State Park beaches on Amelia Island

From Playalinda Beach at Canaveral National Seashore, visitors watch a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket launch from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. JOE BURBANK/ORLANDO SENTINEL/TNS

Best beach for rocket launch viewing

Playalinda Beach is located inside Canaveral National Seashore, one of Florida's 11 national parks. It's an undeveloped beach known for its serene environment and pristine shoreline and is a premier location from which to watch a rocket launch. Always check their website or Kennedy Space Center's website for the most up-to-date info regarding launches. Note: The park restricts access when it reaches capacity for safety purposes.

Park admission: Park passes are valid for seven days. $20 per vehicle; $15 per motorcycle; $10 per pedestrian or cyclist

If you go: Florida State Road 406/402 in Titusville; 321-267-1110; nps.gov/cana

Runners-up: Jetty Park Beach at Port Canaveral and Alan Shepard Park in Cocoa Beach

Best tidal pool beach

With the Atlantic Ocean on one side and the Matanzas River on the other, **Washington Oaks Gardens State Park** preserves 425 acres of coastal scenery along State Road A1A in Palm Coast. On the state park's beach (one of the few beaches in Florida with rocks), waves have exposed coquina rock and scattered boulders – which creates the ideal situation for exploring the tidal pools, where you might find small fish, shrimp, sea stars, sea urchins, sea cucumbers, barnacles and anemones.

Park admission: Use the honor box to pay fees. Correct change is required. $4 for single-occupant vehicle; $5 per vehicle (limit 2-8 people per vehicle); $2 for pedestrians, bicyclists, extra passengers

If you go: 6400 N. Oceanshore Blvd. in Palm Coast; 386-446-6780; floridastateparks.org/park/washington-oaks

Runners-up: Bahia Honda State Park in the Keys and Cedar Key beaches

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Pets can enjoy the dog-friendly beach at Smyrna B Park in Volusia County. The park is perched on the northern tip of the New Smyrna Beach peninsula and is surrounded by water on three sides. CASSIE ARMSTRONG/ ORLANDO SENTINEL/TNS

Miami, between Biscayne Bay and the Atlantic Ocean.

Runners-up: Panama City Beach and Daytona Beach

Most family-friendly beach

Siesta Key in Sarasota is known for its sugary sand beach, which is a hit with kids who want to build sandcastles. The beach offers calm, clear and shallow turquoise water for swimmers of all ages, and lifeguards are posted year-round. The Gulf Coast barrier-island beach sports a sandcastle-themed playground, volleyball and tennis courts, a huge parking lot that's free and a concession stand – where you can take advantage of beach rentals. Tripadvisor ranked the Sarasota beach first in its 2020 list of the Top 25 beaches in the country. The site also ranked Siesta Key Beach as the No. 11 beach in the world.

If you go: 948 Beach Road in Siesta Key; 941-861-5000; visitsarasota.com/siesta-key

Runners-up: St. Augustine Beach and Dubois Park in Jupiter

Best dog beach

Your leashed dog will love splashing in the waves at **Smyrna Dunes Park,** which is comprised of 73 acres of pristine, waterfront land at the northern tip of New Smyrna Beach. The park has restrictions on which parts of the

state-park

Runners-up: Cayo Costa State Park, Pine Island and Calusa Beach, Florida Keys

Best beach for shark's teeth

Beachcombers know the Gulf beaches in and around Southwest Florida are the best places to search for prehistoric shark's teeth. **Caspersen Beach in Venice** is an exceptionally fine spot – and a good shelling beach too. Walk along the shoreline and look for the shiny black fossils as they roll onto the shore with the tide. Or purchase a "Venice Snow Shovel," a screened basket fitted onto a long handle, and wade out a few feet into the water to scoop up your treasures. Most shark teeth found near the shore are 1/8-inch to 3/4-inch or even a bit larger.

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Runners-up: Casey Key in Nokomis and Fort Clinch State Park beaches on Amelia Island

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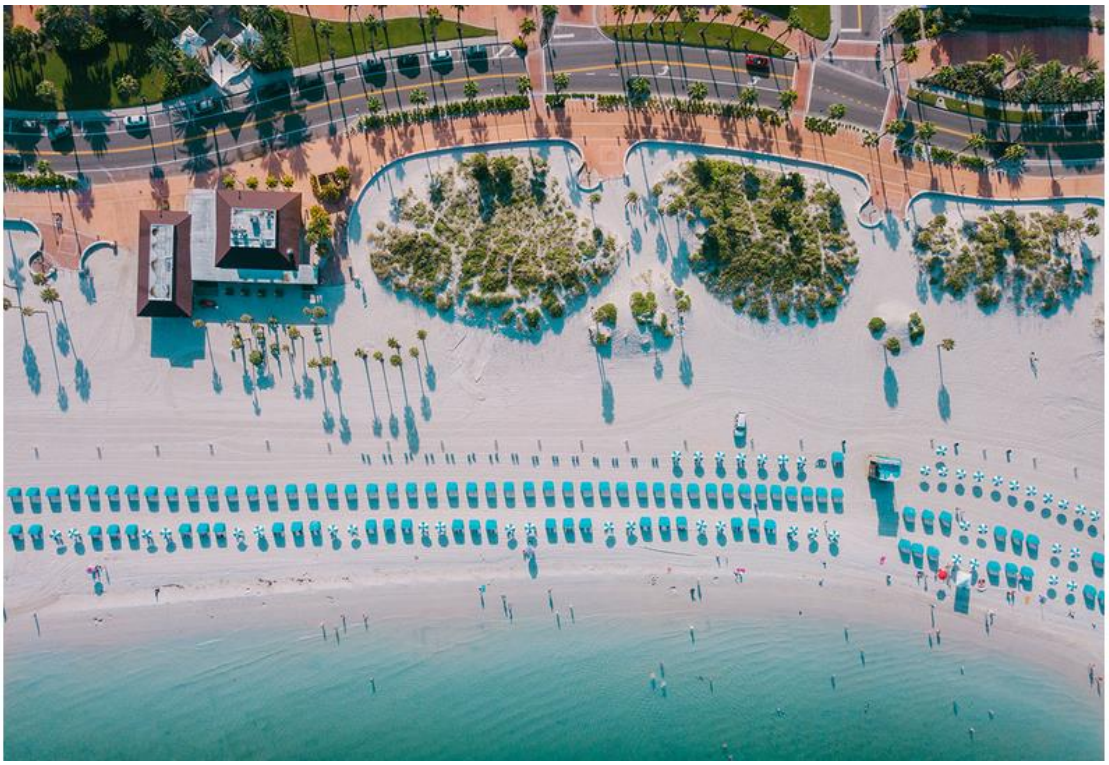
APRIL 8, 2021

THE 15 BEST BEACHES IN FLORIDA TO VISIT THIS YEAR

FLORIDA



BEST BEACHES IN FLORIDA

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One thing is for sure, Florida boasts miles and miles of beautiful beaches, featuring sugar-white sand, emerald waters, and delicious fresh cuisine. There are endless options of Florida Beaches to choose from spanning from the Panhandle, Gulf Coast, South, throughout the Atlantic.

Here are the **Best Beaches in Florida** for the ultimate beach day. The top 15 Florida Beaches to put on your bucket list.

And before you go, be sure to check cheap flights to Florida. Now let's get into the list.

Let's Connect on Social: Instagram | Facebook | Pinterest | TikTok

AMELIA ISLAND, FLORIDA

Photo courtesy of Amelia Island

Last but not least on the list is Amelia Island, Northeast Florida's coastal treasure. This island is a barrier island rich in colorful history and gorgeous beauty. The beaches on Amelia island have pristine water and abundant wildlife.

Check out Fernandina Beach, once a vibrant Victorian seaport village, now a charming downtown destination filled with eclectic boutique shopping, attractions, and eateries making this a perfect stop for a girl's trip.

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Travel

Hotel Intel: Florida resorts opening from Atlantic to Gulf

Beyond Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale, here is the scoop on other openings in Florida.

Rochelle Lash • Special to the Montreal Gazette
Apr 22, 2021 • April 22, 2021 • 4 minute read • Join the conversation

For decades before COVID-19, an average of nearly 4 million Canadians headed annually to the Sunshine State. We have been valued visitors, whether as one-week vacationers or all-winter snowbirds. The tourism numbers have been down recently, but we'll be back when the time is right.

Hotel Intel reported on new hotels for post-pandemic travel in Palm Beach County on Nov. 14, 2020, and in Fort Lauderdale on Dec. 19, 2020. Here is the scoop on other openings.

Atlantic coast: The upbeat AC Hotel Fort Lauderdale Beach, a Marriott, is aiming to open within months, steps from Fort Lauderdale Beach and the Atlantic Ocean. A moderately priced brand, the 171-room AC will glow with modern décor and ocean views. Guests can frolic in a large pool or take break from the sun in the library. The lobby bar will serve tapas and cocktails and AC Kitchen will dish out a Euro-inspired breakfast including Italian prosciutto, French croissants and Spanish egg tarts, plus cheese and yogurt.

Edging further north, the scenic paradise of Amelia Island has a dual-brand opening planned for May. Courtyard by Marriott, accessible and comfortable, and SpringHill Suites, an all-suite hotel, will be two moderately-priced getaways across the street from the Atlantic Ocean. The complex is near the entertaining town of Fernandina Beach and adjacent to Fort Clinch, a national park. The hotels will share a pool, restaurants and bars. For dining out, the Boat House is one of Amelia Island's newest and best restaurants.

Gulf Coast: In Fort Myers, the Luminary Hotel & Co., part of the design-forward Autograph Collection of Marriott International, opened in 2020 in the spirited, downtown River District, which pops with shops and entertainment. The 243-room Luminary is home to Silver King Ocean Brasserie, the Beacon Social Drinkery rooftop lounge and Ella Mae's Diner, indoor and outdoor fitness and a spacious pool. Fort Myers, served by Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW), is 48 kilometres north of Naples.

IF YOU GO:

Hotel information available at VISIT FLORIDA: 888-735-2872, visitflorida.com.

Air Canada: aircanada.com (subject to change): Air Canada flies from Montreal to Fort Lauderdale (three times a week in April, increasing to four times in May). It also flies from Toronto to Fort Lauderdale and Orlando.

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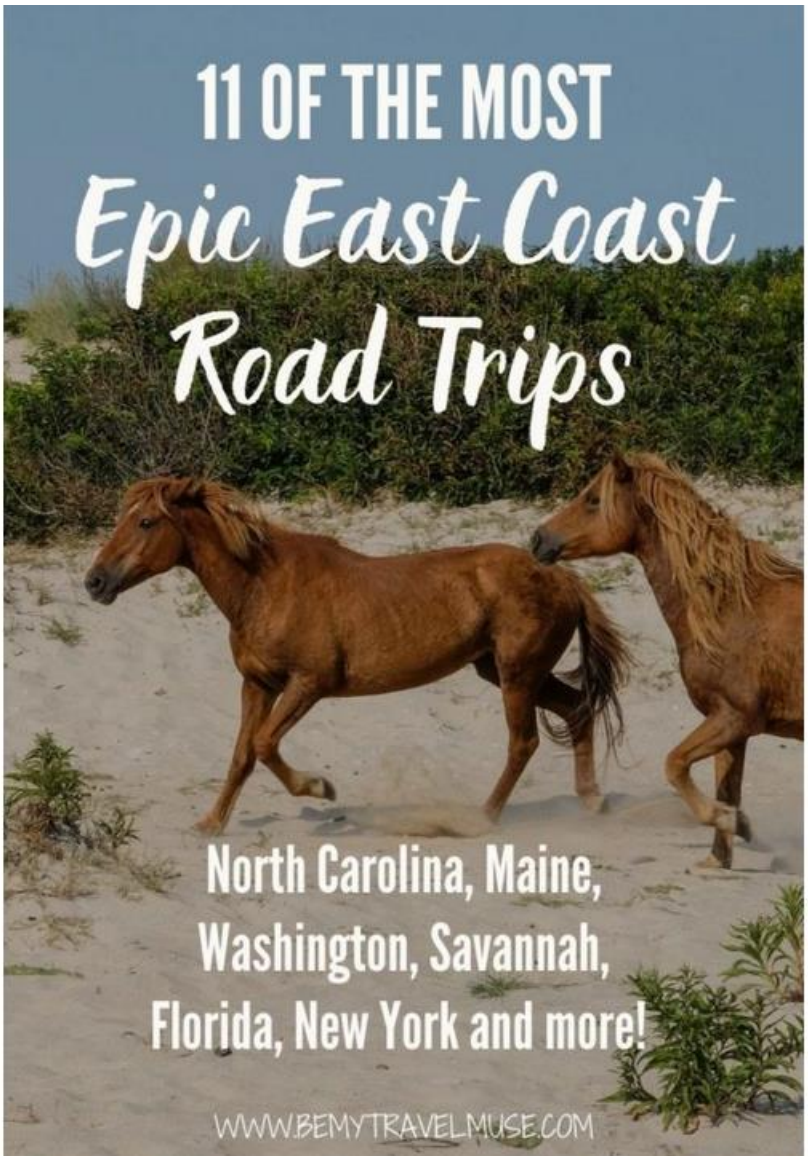
11 of the Most Epic East Coast Road Trips

03/04/2021 by Emily — 5 Comments



Thinking of heading out on your next road trip adventure, but not sure where to go? We've got you covered. Whether you reside on the East Coast or are looking for a trip out of a bigger city, this list is sure to inspire an epic journey, no matter which one you choose:

3. Wilmington, NC to Jacksonville, FL

This list isn't complete without a truly coastal road trip full of some of the East Coast's best beach destinations. This route is great for a longer trip, as the 7 hour drive can be broken up with as many stops as you want to make. Here are just a few:

- **Wilmington, NC:** Wilmington is a versatile place to start your journey as it boasts all kinds of attractions and outdoor fun. As the first American city to receive the designation of "American World War II Heritage City," there is plenty of history here. You can also find plenty of museums, gardens, and island beach attractions in town.
- **Kiawah Island, SC:** While this destination is best known for its luxury beach resorts, it is also home to some incredible wildlife. The beach itself is pristine and perfect for a relaxing vacation.
- **Hilton Head Island, SC:** This is another more laid back beach town which boasts clean shores and plentiful wildlife. Get on the water and see if you can spot the dolphins that inhabit the area, or try the area's famous lowcountry cuisine.
- **Amelia Island, FL:** Truly an enchanting destination, Amelia Island is a great place to enjoy the uncrowded beach and soak up the sun. The island is home to beautiful marshes, rivers and greenways to explore and is just a quick drive away from Cumberland where you can see wild horses.

The Latest Openings and Renovations in Florida Planners Should Know About (2021)

April 12, 2021 | Jennifer Juergens

9 Shares

Florida boasts growth across the state, with new hotels and renovations happening at breakneck speed. In just the first two months of 2021, 29 hotels opened. Here's a sampling of what's new.

9 Shares

Amelia Island

- **Courtyard and Springhill Suites by Marriott in Fernandina Beach** opened in May and will be operating under one roof. The two hotels will share four stories and 239 guest rooms, featuring a spacious pool and outdoor area, and state-of-the-art meeting and event space. While the SpringHill Suites property does not have dedicated meeting space, it is connected to Courtyard Amelia Island and offers access to the 6,060 square feet of meeting space there.

THE BEST PLACES TO VISIT IN FLORIDA

Updated on: April 13, 2021 by ThePlanetD Team

It isn't easy to put together a list of the best places to visit in Florida because there are just too many. Of course, that's not a bad problem to have if you've got a month to travel. But if you don't have that much time then we're here to help you out.

Florida was named by Spaniard Juan Ponce De Leon who discovered its Atlantic coast in the 16th century. He called it La Florida and claimed the state for Spain. The Spanish colonized the state until the 1800s when it was transferred to the U.S. Up next, we've rounded up some of the best places to visit in Florida so you can plan your trip for optimum fun.

- Some attractions and destinations may be affected by COVID 19. Please check with each place to see closures and restrictions but Florida is open for business with restaurants, museums and theme parks are open. As the US rapidly vaccinates everyone, things will constantly be changing in Florida. Check out **VisitFlorida for guidance.**

Best Places To Visit In Florida

Beaches To Visit

Florida beaches are some of the top places to visit in Florida. You have sand beaches all over the state and each beach has its own vibe. You can visit **South Beach in Miami** to see and be seen or head to **West Palm Beach to whip down a slide** at one of their water parks. There's also a ton of other beaches like **Miami Beach, St. Pete Beach** just west of St. Petersburg, as well as **Lido Beach in Sarasota**.

- Other not to miss beaches are of the Palm Beaches, Panama City Beach, Delray Beach, and Clearwater Beach to name just a few.
- Panama Beach is known for good fishing as well as great scuba diving.
- St. Pete Beach is famous for amazing water sports. Water sports include wakeboarding, parasailing and a whole bunch more.

Whether you want to take a beach walk or just lay out on the beach, you have a wide selection of places in Florida that are beach friendly with a ton of things to do when you're done just laying out.

Amelia Island

Amelia Island is one of the best destinations in all of Florida if you like the quaint and cute. It gets more visitors than all of the other barrier islands and has won the heart of the jet set as is evident from the plethora of high-end hotels and golf clubs that dot this luxury island on the Atlantic Ocean.

Caladesi Island State Park

Sitting pretty in the Gulf of Mexico, Caladesi Island State Park is one of the most cleaen and pristine places in Florida. You can only get there by boat and once you get there, your only staying options are cabins or boat camping. Found by the Spanish in the 17th century, this Gulf of Mexico island still holds an old magic that has not been marred by the hands of time.

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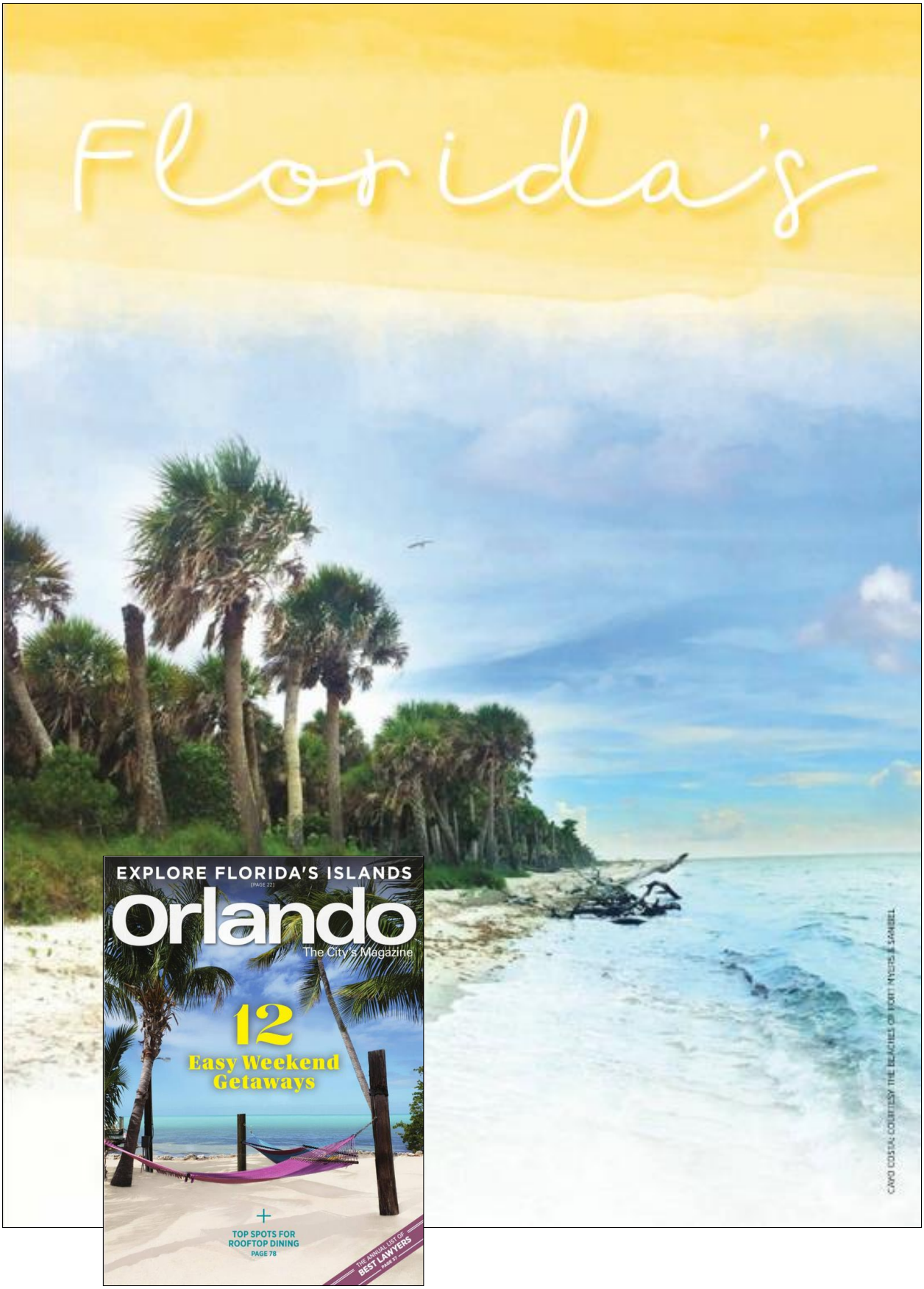
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SUNNY iSLES

One estimate of Florida's islands puts the number at around 4,500. Some are just tiny spits of land, others serve as protective barriers, and many are tourist havens. But one thing they all have in common is the power to lure us to their shores.

BY PATRICIA LETAKIS

HAYWORTH PR

Little Talbot Island

There is a small island off Northeast Florida's Atlantic coast with no throngs of tourists, no traffic jams, and no buildings, except for a lone ranger's station. Instead, what you'll find is a rare slice of unspoiled Florida: a glowing alabaster beach, shapely sand dunes, rolling salty surf and peaceful tidal creeks. It's called Little Talbot Island, and every inch of it is a well-preserved state park.

A stay on this undeveloped barrier island may not be for everyone, since the accommodations here would be your own tent or RV. But spending the day on this slice of paradise is another story, as Amelia Island with its diverse lodging options is just a few miles up the coast.

Lying on Little Talbot's warm white beach, staring at an azure sky and mesmerizing waves, is a heavenly way to unwind. As tempting as it is to while away the entire day, there's exploring to do, starting with the Dune Ridge Trail. On the island's north end, the circular path's first two miles travel through a mature maritime forest and across ancient dune ridges. Arching live oak branches, laden with Spanish moss and dwarfed by loblolly pines, shade the way. Hikers pass palmetto, cedar, holly and spicy bay trees. Gradually the landscape changes from thick woods to dunes covered with the long shoots of flowering railroad vines, whose purpose is to prevent beach erosion. On the trail's last two miles of beach, driftwood skeletons appear on the shore and wandering gopher tortoises camouflage in the sands.

The west side of the island, with its tranquil salt marshes, is bliss for kayakers. Narrow Myrtle Creek, tucked between Little Talbot and Long Island, offers paddlers a peaceful stretch of estuarine grasslands—and light tackle anglers a chance to catch redfish, flounder, trout and black drum. More adventurous kayakers can take the wider Simpson Creek north past Big Talbot Island and the bluffs of Half Moon. Or they can head south to Fort George Island, home to the historic Ribault Clubhouse and the Kingsley Plantation, circa 1700s.

Another great way to enjoy the island is to bicycle its main asphalt road, Dune Ridge Trail or hard-pack sandy beach. Birders can spy shorebirds along the Atlantic coast, waders in the marsh, and songbirds in the forest. *visitjacksonville.com*

VISITJACKSONVILLE.COM

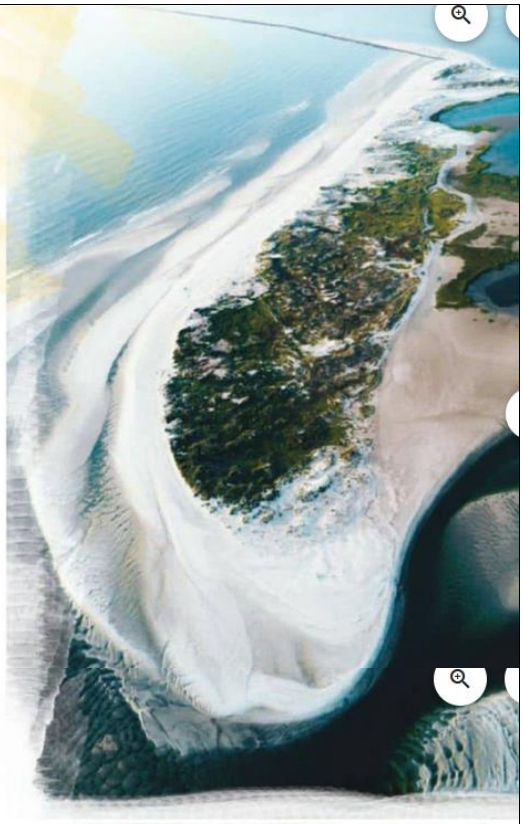
DON'T MISS...

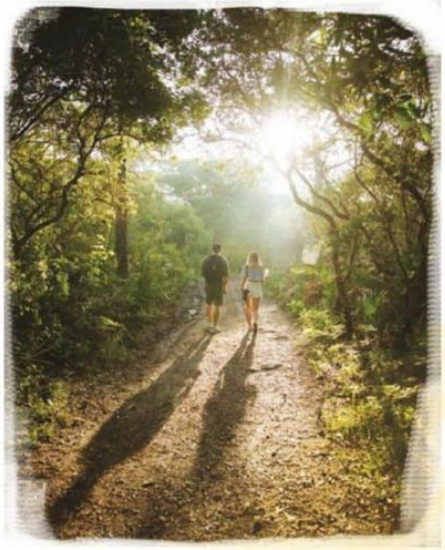
FORT GEORGE ISLAND

There are two historic sites worth visiting on this neighboring island. The Ribault Club, a country club constructed in 1928 on top of a 3,000-year-old Native American shell midden, now serves as the Fort George Island Cultural State Park visitors center. At the Kingsley Plantation, which produced sea island cotton, you can tour the main house built in 1797 and tabby slave cabins.

KAYAK AMELIA

Rent a kayak or paddleboard from Kayak Amelia, Little Talbot's official outfitter on the island, or join one of their eco-tours. The Salt Marsh Tour explores a series of tributaries that wind through wetlands; spot wading birds and observe the ecosystem close up. The Bar Hopping tour stops on sandbars exposed as the tide goes out, revealing indigenous critters.





Aerial view of Little Talbot Island State Park; hiking along the Dune Ridge Trail

HAYWORTH PR

Discover Florida's 12 Best Islands: Explore Little Talbot Island

This state park is a must-see!

April 1, 2021 by Patricia Letakis

There is a small island off Northeast Florida's Atlantic coast with no throngs of tourists, no traffic jams, and no buildings, except for a lone ranger's station. Instead, what you'll find is a rare slice of unspoiled Florida: a glowing alabaster beach, shapely sand dunes, rolling salty surf and peaceful tidal creeks. It's called Little Talbot Island, and every inch of it is a well-preserved state park.

A stay on this undeveloped barrier island may not be for everyone, since the accommodations here would be your own tent or RV. But spending the day on this slice of paradise is another story, as Amelia Island with its diverse lodging options is just a few miles up the coast.

Lying on Little Talbot's warm white beach, staring at an azure sky and mesmerizing waves, is a heavenly way to unwind. As tempting as it is to while away the entire day, there's exploring to do, starting with the Dune Ridge Trail. On the island's north end, the circular path's first two miles travel through a mature maritime forest and across ancient dune ridges. Arching live oak branches, laden with Spanish moss and dwarfed by loblolly pines, shade the way. Hikers pass palmetto, cedar, holly and spicy bay trees. Gradually the landscape changes from thick woods to dunes covered with the long shoots of flowering railroad vines, whose purpose is to prevent beach erosion. On the trail's last two miles of beach, driftwood skeletons appear on the shore and wandering gopher tortoises camouflage in the sands.

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Fitness Vacation Giveaway

SARAH FIELDING / APRIL 25, 2021 / MOM SWEEPSTAKES, SWEEPSTAKES

Win 2 nights in the Ritz-Carlton on Amelia Island. This is a fitness vacation break!

– Two night stay (good for up to 2 years!) at The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island, Florida

– $450 credit towards airfare

– $240 Panda Sunglasses Gift Card

– $200 Gift Certificate to Jambu.com

– Just Women's Sports hoodie + hat

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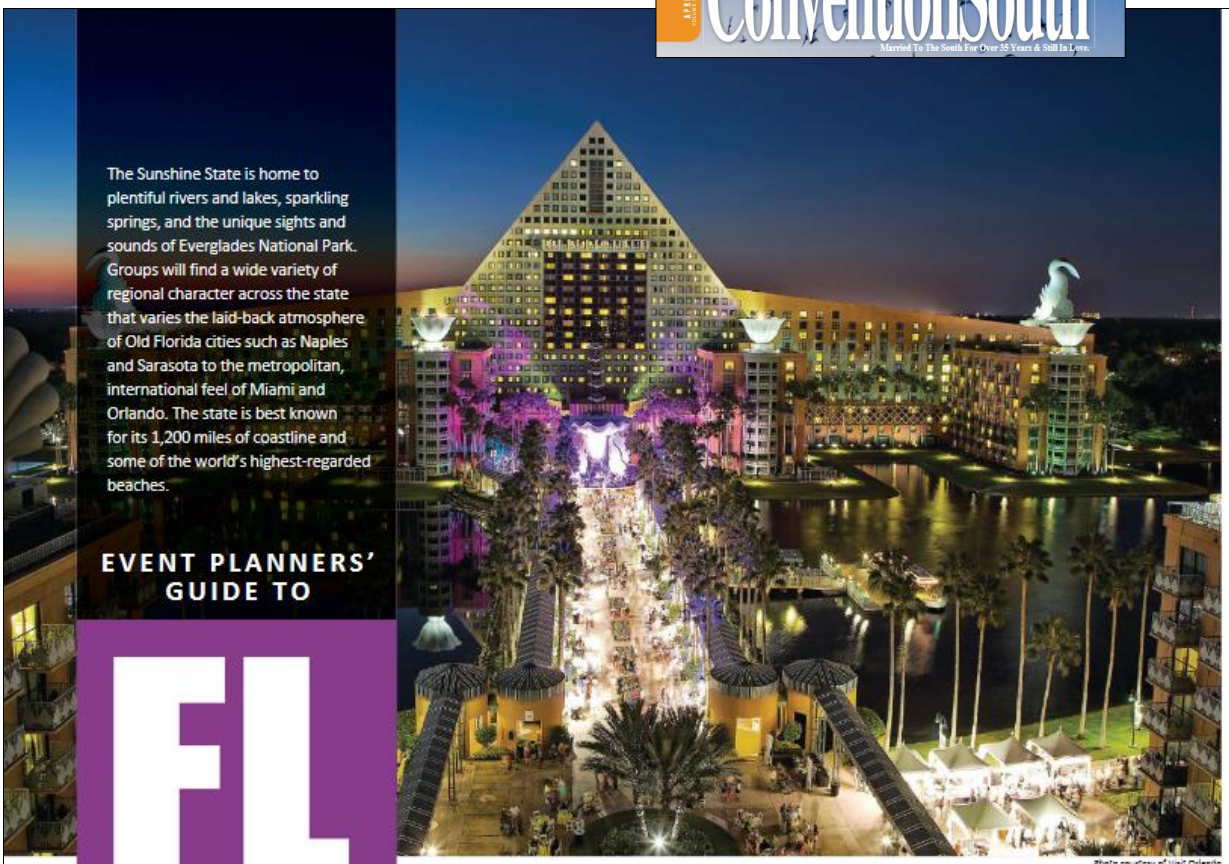

Photo courtesy of Visit Orlando

The Sunshine State is home to plentiful rivers and lakes, sparkling springs, and the unique sights and sounds of Everglades National Park. Groups will find a wide variety of regional character across the state that varies the laid-back atmosphere of Old Florida cities such as Naples and Sarasota to the metropolitan, international feel of Miami and Orlando. The state is best known for its 1,200 miles of coastline and some of the world's highest-regarded beaches.

EVENT PLANNERS' GUIDE TO

FL Florida

BY D. FRAN MORLEY AND WAYNE T. WATERS

Of the many things Orlando is known for, perhaps the most impressive is that it is the most visited destination in the nation. On top of this, it is home to the Orange County Convention Center, one of the largest convention centers in the world, which provides approximately $3 billion in economic impact to central Florida annually. In recent years, the Convention Center has averaged nearly 200 events, including 115 conventions and trade shows that attract more than 1.5 million attendees to the region each year.

PANHANDLE

Pensacola, Pensacola Beach, Perdido Key

VisitPensacola.com; @VisitPensacola

The largest city on the Florida Panhandle, America's oldest settlement, and home to NAS Pensacola and the famed U.S. Navy Blue Angels flight demonstration squadron, Pensacola provides planners with miles of uncrowded beaches on Pensacola Beach, Perdido Key, and the Gulf Islands National Seashore, boutique venues for smaller meetings, and a vibrant downtown. According to Kaya Man, partner relations manager with Visit Pensacola, planners can incorporate local flavor in a number of ways, with functions at the waterfront 5,038-seat Blue Wahoos baseball stadium, cruises on Pensacola Bay, and events at downtown's Historic Village or at NAS Pensacola, with the National Flight Academy, the Naval Aviation Museum, and Pensacola Lighthouse.

"Seville Quarters in downtown features seven bars under one roof for meetings, food, drinks, and fun. Lagunas on Pensacola Beach is our newest adventure park, and perfect for team building," Man said.

New hotels and venues for 2021 include Oyster Bay Boutique Hotel (formerly the Lee House), with eight guest rooms and indoor and outdoor event space, and the 119-room Courtyard Marriott West, with two meeting rooms. Downtown's Blue Wahoos Stadium is the first professional baseball stadium in the U.S. to offer overnight guest stays. According to team officials, the stadium offers a newly-renovated and fully-furnished clubhouse, with shared sleeping space for up to 10 guests, a batting cage, and the field itself for meetings, retreats, and parties. Pier Suite Events is a new venue on Pensacola Beach with a 2,049-square-foot event room for parties, receptions, and corporate events for up to 150 people.

The Pensacola area has more than 10,000 guest rooms at a variety of price points.

HAYWORTH PR

Amelia Island

AmeliaIsland.com; @VisitAmeliaIsland

Just 30 minutes from Jacksonville International Airport and easily accessed by highway, Amelia Island is a 13-mile-long barrier island where groups will enjoy the natural beauty of the beaches, the historic charm of the town of Fernandina Beach, and world-class resorts with five-star service, all complemented by Southern charm. Jaime Fallon, director of events and trade for Visit Amelia Island, notes the island is a place where groups "can safely come together and feel as though you are a world away."

Opportunities for events to incorporate local flair are abundant, Fallon noted.

"Have you ever ridden a horse on the beach, built a giant sandcastle with a group, eaten dinner at a fort, or parachuted out of a plane? Amelia Island offers your group unique teambuilding experiences in an enchanting and unforgettable oasis," she said. "We have something for the health conscious, the nature lover, the thrill seeker, the traditional tourist, and even the finicky foodie. Your meeting group adventure is only 15 minutes in any direction on our charming barrier island."

There are 3,000 guest rooms on the island, including the Omni Amelia Island Resort and the Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island. A new 239-room dual-branded Courtyard and SpringHill Suites by Marriott is set to open this April adjacent to Fort Clinch, a 1,400-acre national park. The island is also home to two breweries, a distillery, and a microbrew pub, all suitable for group outings, according to Fallon.

Amelia Island Harbor

Photo courtesy of Deremer Studios/Amelia Island CVB

Planning An Event In Florida?

Check out some of our favorite venues. This selection is full of spectacular ocean views, top-notch amenities, and exciting opportunities to explore the local surroundings.

South Walton County

See Breakout Spotlight On Page 46

Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa

- 602 guest rooms
- 40,000 sq. ft. indoor meeting space
- 20,000 sq. ft. outdoor event space

See Breakout Spotlight On Page 38

The Pearl Hotel

- 55 guest rooms
- 3,500 sq. ft. indoor/outdoor space
- boardroom, private dining room, cabana deck, and ballroom

Amelia Island

Omni Amelia Island Resort

- 404 guest rooms, plus more than 300 villas
- 80,000 sq. ft. meeting space
- 29,000 sq. ft. outdoor space
- 30 meeting rooms
- meeting capacity: 1,000

The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island

- 446 guest rooms
- 50,000 sq. ft. meeting space
- 27,752 sq. ft. exhibit space
- 19 meeting rooms

SELF

You Deserve a Vacation!

Now's your moment to enter for the chance to win an incredible vacation! You could win a two-night stay (good for up to two years!) at the Ritz-Carlton in Amelia Island, Florida, and other awesome prizes! Don't wait—enter below!

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After a year indoors, are you ready to move and get out in the sun?

Do just that with a two-night fitness vacation at The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island in Florida for you and a friend.

Enter to win, and you'll also receive flight credits and gift certificates to shop your favorite sunglasses and tennis shoes. Getaway, here you come.

Enter to Win

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7 Best Beach Towns in Florida for Families

Last updated: April 7, 2021 ·

Florida, United States Destinations

By: Tarlie Harris

406 463 64

933 SHARES

Whether your family is sporty, nerdy, lazy, foodie, or all of the above, you are sure to love one of our picks for best beach towns in Florida. After all, the state has over 1,000 miles of sandy beach. The difficult part can be narrowing down your choices!

What makes a great family beach town? Let's assume easy access to a sandy beach is a given. Add in some kid-friendly restaurants, a few entertainment options, and a variety of places to stay and you've got some real contenders. Each beach town in this guide checks all of these boxes and throws in some unique, local character for good measure.

Best Beach Towns in Florida

3. Amelia Island

Amelia Island is the northern-most barrier island on Florida's east coast. Due to its location, **it's one of the most unique coastal areas in Florida**.

History buffs will be especially delighted with all there is to learn about the “Isle of 8 Flags” in **historic downtown Fernandina**. The **giant oaks** that cover the island are enough to make any amateur nature photographer swoon. But really, whether you are looking for history, nature, outdoor adventures, or beautiful beaches, Amelia Island will not disappoint.

Have a kid who loves to skateboard? A unique way to tour Amelia Island is on a kid-friendly skateboard tour. They even take photos of your family on the boards so you can have a great keepsake of this fun experience.

Can you imagine anything more idyllic than a horseback ride along the seashore at sunset? Book a ride with **Amelia Island Horseback Riding**. If you’d rather enjoy horses from afar, **take a cruise with Amelia River Cruises** to see the wild horses of Cumberland Island, along with dolphins and manatees in the river.

If you would rather get active while exploring the water, check out this highly-rated, family-friendly guided kayak tour.

The island maintains **30+ miles of bike trails**. With designated “casual” and “advanced” trails, your family can get on those casual trails and not feel like you are in the way of serious bike riders.

Both the **Ritz Carlton and the Omni Amelia Island Resort have large, luxury resorts** on the island. At the other end of the spectrum, families can camp at **Fort Clinch State Park.** For something right down the middle, the Hampton Inn & Suites Amelia Island-Historic Harbor Front overlooks the Fernandina Beach Marina and is a few blocks from the historic district.

Here Are Our 30++ Best Girls Trips This Spring And Summer

By Adventure Designed - April 19, 2021

Ready to get away with the girls but unsure where to go and if you should make the time? Well, it turns out spending time with friends releases a friendly little thing called oxytocin, a hormone that acts as a neurotransmitter helping to decrease stress, increase relaxation, and enhance psychological stability.

So pack your bags, ladies! If you didn't have enough reasons for a trip with your gal pals, now you do – it's time for a medically mandated girls getaway.

Image by We Are Travel Girls

Below we'll share the nine best trips based on how you and your girls are looking to spend your getaway – from vineyard hopping like a master somm to getting active and living la vida luxe, we've got you covered! Plus, we'll give you options both near and far so planning the trip is a breeze no matter where you're able to travel.

7 For: *A Culinary Adventure*

If this sounds like your gal pals…

Swapping recipes + watching cooking shows + eating great food = great girl time

You should go to…

Nearby: Salt Cooking School at Amelia Island Ritz

Not Too Far: Checkout Aurora Cooks! brought to you by Inns of Aurora in Aurora, New York for signature demonstrations, tasting experiences, and skills workshops.

In This Country: For something equally as cool as Aurora Cooks! but on the West Coast, visit Cavallo Point in Sausalito, California. Once there you'll enjoy their on-site cooking school complete with private chef-led experiences for an evening of fine dining and exclusive tips.

International: It wouldn't be fair to mention culinary adventures without a nod to France. In Paris, book three days in the kitchen with the chefs at Ritz Paris kitchens. If you'd rather visit the heart of the Tuscan countryside, head to Borgo Santo Pietro and surround yourself with Michelin-starred restaurants, an extensive working farm, and an on-site cooking school.

Get the Scoop

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THE 17 MOST ROMANTIC GETAWAYS IN FLORIDA FOR ACTIVE COUPLES

0 | ★★★★★

Are you an active couple looking for a romantic getaway in Florida but don't want to get stuck on a boxed vacation with kids and canes? We're here to tell you that Florida is full of romance and adventure; you just need to know where to look. We should know. We lived and Florida for years and traveled all across the Sunshine State, discovering amazing adventures for people who want to travel experience and activity first, and then fill in with romantic places to stay and delicious food to eat.

Our guide covers the most romantic things to do in Florida at the most romantic hotels in Florida. You'll explore from A-Amelia Island around the coast to Z-Zepher Hills and beyond. (warning – Zepher Hills may or may not be rolled into greater Tampa😉)

WHAT DO ACTIVE COUPLES DO ON A ROMANTIC GETAWAY TO FLORIDA?

We'll introduce things to do for active couples in Florida and romantic resorts that facilitate the fun. You'll find some no-brainers on the list, like private islands in the Keys and the perennial who's who of romantic Florida hotels. You'll also find a few surprises, like mermaid-themed B&Bs where you can swim with manatees right off your own private dock.

Keep reading if you love romance, coral reefs, baby manatees, hatching sea turtles, 80-lb miniature deer, white sand beaches, golden sunsets, and warm blue water. You'll find all this and more in our guide to romantic getaways in Florida. We even include an interactive map with every property in this guide, along with pictures and a brief description. (if the map doesn't pop up below, just hit the refresh button. It's worth it 😉) Finally, we've included our affiliate links for these hotels, so if you like our guide, you can click in from here and give us a little love at no extra cost to you.

THE MOST ROMANTIC HOTELS ON AMELIA ISLAND – RITZ-CARLTON AMELIA ISLAND

Our choice for the most romantic hotel on Amelia Island is the Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island because it has accessible tranquility with the full Ritz level of service. What makes Amelia Island so accessible and tranquil? It is only 30-minute outside of Jacksonville in Florida's northeastern-most corner and features 13-miles of golden shores. Active couples can choose from an easy drive down I-95 or plentiful flights into the Jacksonville Airport. From there, it's just a short hop out to the beach to dip your toes in the ocean. The easy access makes Amelia Island a perfect Florida weekend getaway for couples.

We seriously considered having me work in Jacksonville and having Jenn work at the Amelia Island Ritz, but we moved to San Diego for a few years instead before ultimately heading to Florida. On the bright side, we learned all about romantic Southern California getaways and biking in San Diego during our time in California.

When Jenn was a Spa Lead and opened up the Tucson Ritz-Carlton Dove Mountain, a member of the property's opening team came from the Ritz at Amelia Island and couldn't stop raving about how beautiful the property was. This stunning oceanfront hotel continually tops lists for the most romantic hotel in Florida, includes an on-property AAA Five-Diamond restaurant, Salt. Active couples will love having access to the resident resort naturalist and the Sandcastle Concierge service to arrange any activities.

Romantic things to do on Amelia Island include:

- Riding horses on the beach
- Kayaking Pumpkin Hill Creek Preserve State Park
- Dining at world-class restaurants
- Exploring Amelia Island State Park and Talbot Island State Park
- Watching the sunrise over the Atlantic

HAYWORTH PR

Fitness Vacation Giveaway

April 24, 2021 By — Leave a Comment

Win 2 nights in the Ritz-Carlton on Amelia Island. This is a fitness vacation break!

– Two night stay (good for up to 2 years!) at The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island, Florida

– $450 credit towards airfare

– $240 Panda Sunglasses Gift Card

– $200 Gift Certificate to Jambu.com

– Just Women's Sports hoodie + hat

{US Only, 18+, Single Entry, Ends April 30, 2021}

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South's Greatest Destinations 2021

The guide to the greatest places to stay, play, eat and shop from Charleston to Jacksonville.

March 30, 2021 BY LAUREN FLEMMING

South present's our hotly anticipated, annual guide to the Greatest Destinations of 2021. Each year, South produces the definitive list of the best places to stay, play, eat and shop in Charleston, Hilton Head Island, Bluffton, Savannah and Jacksonville. This year, we've added some new locations for an exhaustive guide to the Coastal South.

South's Greatest Destinations serves as an annual guide to the best locations in the coastal South from Charleston through Jacksonville. The list includes the premier places to stay and the hottest spots to play, as well as the best bites and top shops. In the past year, the Southeast saw continuous visitors—despite recent restrictions—proving there is just something inexplicably hospitable about our beautiful region. Without further ado, here is South's definitive guide to the greatest destinations.

1. Savannah, Georgia

Travelers come to the Hostess City to experience the true essence of Southern hospitality. The brick walkways and cobblestone roads bear the evidence of generations of welcomed visitors—even the Spanish moss seems to reach from the tree tops with open arms. Here are the host's top choices to stay, play, eat and shop.

2. Jacksonville, Florida

Below the Florida-Georgia line, temperatures rise and the ante ups as the Jacksonville skyline emerges on the horizon. Endless urban fun juxtaposed with sublime coastal proximity creates the ultimate Southern playground.

Amelia Schoolhouse Inn

Originally the first schoolhouse on Amelia Island, located in downtown Fernandina Beach, the Amelia Schoolhouse Inn is now a boutique hotel with modern amenities. In typical schoolhouse fashion, guests can get into some trouble at "The Principal's Office," or the hotel bar. ameliaschoolhouseinn.com

bb's restaurant + bar

For a swanky night out, head downtown to Jacksonville's business district to bb's restaurant + bar for an award-winning wine list, eclectic bites and groovy vibes. Pro tip: Dessert is a must at bb's. bbsrestaurant.com

Salt Life Food Shack

On the North Florida coast, it's all about that "Salt Life." The popular subculture brand expanded to offer a dining experience that exemplifies the spirit of Salt Life with delicious seafood dishes, cool drinks and a comfortable place to gather with family and friends. saltlifefoodshack.com

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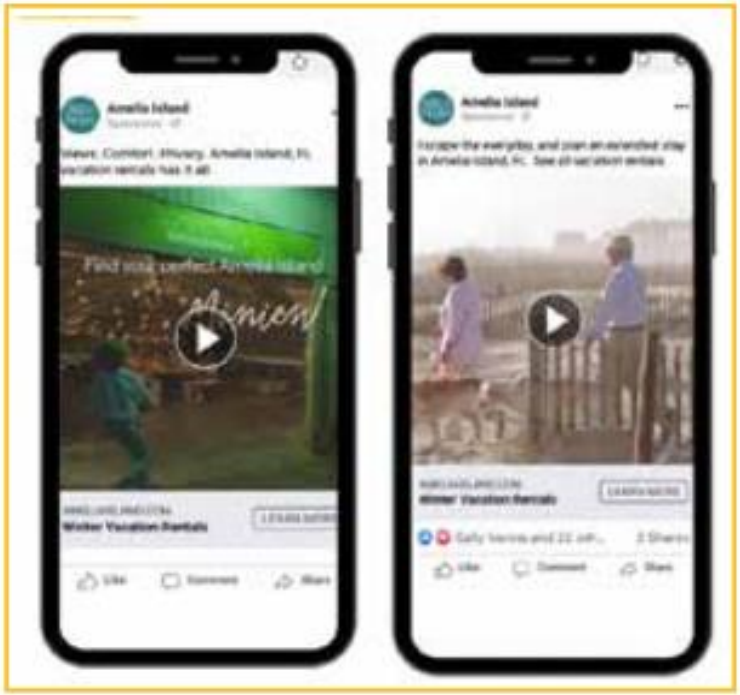
TourismMarketing Today

The Official Newsletter of Destinations Florida, Inc. | www.DestinationsFlorida.org | April 2021

Quick Trips!

Amelia Island CVB Receives Adrian Awards for Marketing Initiatives

The Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) recently celebrated the tourism industry at the 64th annual Adrian Awards, honoring the Amelia Island CVB with one Silver Award and two Bronze Awards. The three awards won by the AICVB were for marketing initiatives that reflect the challenging new tourism landscape, including an augmented reality portal, the Tourism Gives program, and the Moments campaign. *AmeliaIsland.com*



AICVB's Moments Campaign invites visitors to find their perfect Amelia Island moment.

HAYWORTH PR

Publicity Report

May 2021

AMELIA ISLAND

COME MAKE MEMORIES®

Summary

Total Mentions: 20

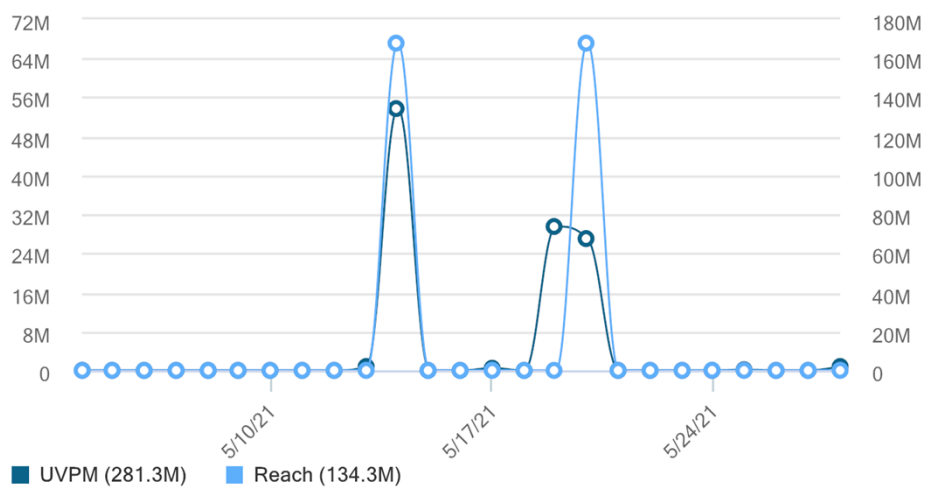
Total Reach: 415.6M

Coverage Summary

Top Articles

HEADLINES	OUTLET	REACH
These Hotel Activities for Kids Are Even Cooler Than Summer Camp	MSN Travel	67,151,557
These Hotel Activities for Kids Are Even Cooler Than Summer Camp	MSN Arabia	67,151,557
These Hotel Activities for Kids Are Even Cooler Than Summer Camp	MSN Travel Canada	67,151,557
Add These Cute Southern Beach Towns to Your Summer Vacation Bucket List	MSN Travel	67,151,557
The Most Charming Small Towns in Florida	MSN Travel	67,151,557
The Most Charming Small Towns in Florida	MSN Arabia	67,151,557
Add These Cute Southern Beach Towns to Your Summer Vacation Bucket List	Country Living Online	3,578,761
These Hotel Activities for Kids Are Even Cooler Than Summer Camp	Travel + Leisure Online	2,005,222
The Most Charming Small Towns in Florida	Travel + Leisure Online	2,005,222
How to Enjoy Florida	Travel + Leisure Online	2,005,222
The 20 Best East Coast Beaches-from Maine to Florida	PureWow	1,128,004
12 Best Florida Beaches for Families	PlanetWare	1,079,501
Classic cars bring traffic and tourism back to Amelia Island after COVID-19 idles visitors	Florida Times-Union Online, The	456,754
The 17 Best East Coast Family Vacations 2021	Family Vacation Critic	375,657
Guide to Meeting & Event Planning inAmelia Island	Northstar Meetings Group	39,274
Best Florida Family Beaches	Tampa Bay Parenting	30,000
You Deserve a Vacation Giveaway	Self Magazine	15,000

Reach



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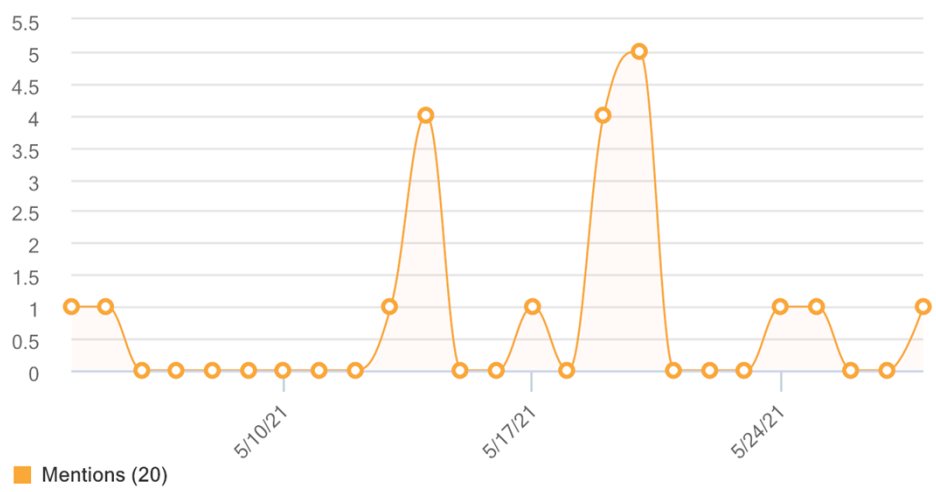
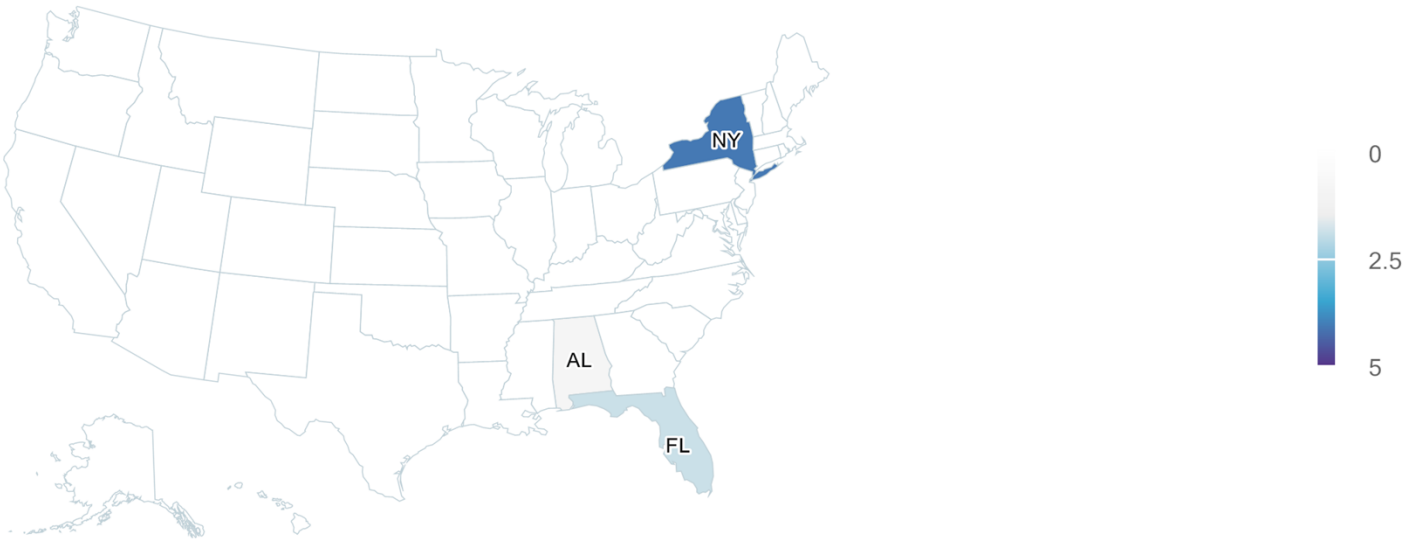


Mentions by Location



Prominent Terms

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beaches-from gorgeous

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

These Hotel Activities for Kids Are Even Cooler Than Summer Camp

Rachel Chang · 5/14/2021

Parents everywhere already know that iPads and Zoom calls don't hold a candle to in-person instruction, but the question for many families has been what to do about it. Enter the travel industry: "Many resorts around the world have recognized the challenges of the past year," says Jack Ezon, a member of T+L's Travel Advisory Board and a father of four. "They're setting up work-and-school opportunities for families that blend virtual classes for the children with experiences based on where you are."

The key to finding the right fit, says Ezon, is choosing a getaway that syncs up with your children's passions. Here are some of the most impressive options.

FOR THE ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS

At **andBeyond** lodges across Africa, the new WildChild program teaches young guests about animal tracking, life in the bush, anti-poaching efforts, and the impact of climate change on animal populations. At **Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve**, near San Juan, Puerto Rico, teens can direct and star in their own conservation-oriented PSA shot in the surrounding jungle.

FOR THE AQUATIC ADVENTURER

The **Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island**, in Florida, has launched a four-night Barrier Island ecology field trip, during which families can kayak or sail the Intracoastal Waterway while learning about marine ecosystems. Other Ritz-Carlton properties, including those in Santa Barbara, California, and Kapalua, Hawaii, have partnered with Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ocean Futures Society, which has developed a range of activities on subjects such as coral reef ecology, organic gardening, and even media production.

FOR THE BUDDING GLOBAL CITIZEN

Mexico's **Waldorf Astoria Los Cabos Pedregal** has a weeklong cultural-immersion program for families that includes Spanish lessons, a wellness class, and a choice of activities including volunteering in a nearby community or learning about Baja California's agricultural history.

At Kenya's **Naboisho Camp**, an Asilia Africa lodge that's a favorite of the safari experts at Alluring Africa, kids learn about local folklore and games from Masai instructors and, depending on COVID-19 conditions, can visit nearby schools to meet future pen pals.

CountryLiving

Add These Cute Southern Beach Towns to Your Summer Vacation Bucket List

Jessica Booth · 2 days ago

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Few things are better than spending a quiet weekend away at a picturesque beach town during the summer months. Time seems to slow down as you relax by the water, and your only real concern is which restaurant to go to for lunch or dinner or which book to read. It's relaxing, fun, and invigorating all at once, and it's definitely the kind of recharge we could all use once in a while.

The South offers so many cute beach towns that settling on just one can feel nearly impossible. Whether you want the kind of tropical Caribbean feel you can get in southern Florida or the nostalgic charm you can find on the Outer Banks in North Carolina, there's something for everyone. And while it certainly isn't hard for a beach town to be adorable (they pretty much nail this on their own), the following seaside towns in the South just seem to stand out a bit more than the others. Start planning your next vacation, because these cute seaside towns are calling your name.

Amelia Island, Florida

This popular destination is known for its gorgeous beaches and historic streets, with thousands of years of history to explore. There are several state parks to check out, like Big Talbot Island, boat tours, and nature walks. There's also so much wildlife, and you can try spotting sea turtles or go bird watching. Historic downtown Fernandina is a great spot for shopping and eating.

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The Most Charming Small Towns in Florida

Skye Sherman · 5/20/2021

Editor's Note: Those who choose to travel are strongly encouraged to check local government restrictions, rules, and safety measures related to COVID-19 and take personal comfort levels and health conditions into consideration before departure.

© Provided by Travel + Leisure cristianl/Getty Images

Florida attracts millions of visitors every year, but the Sunshine State isn't all Miamis and Orlandos. There are plenty of smaller towns — some off the beaten path — with alluring attributes of their own.

Below, find 10 of the best small towns in Florida with populations of 15,000 or less. What they lack in size, they make up for in quaint shops, tasty restaurants, easygoing vibes, and enough water and land activities to keep visitors occupied and happy.

Fernandina Beach

Located on picturesque and lightly ritzy Amelia Island, Fernandina Beach remains a bastion of easy living. It's found in the greater Jacksonville area, and beloved for its boutiques, restaurants, and thriving wildlife. To top it off, visitors can enjoy 13 miles of quiet beaches.

15 Cutest Seaside Towns in the South

Pack up your bathing suits, and head down to the beach!

BY JESSICA BOOTH JUN 6, 2021

JEFF GREENBERG / GETTY IMAGES

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JUMPING ROCKS / GETTY IMAGES

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JESSICA BOOTH

Jessica is a freelance writer from New York who loves kale salads and hanging out with her cats.

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These Hotel Activities for Kids Are Even Cooler Than Summer Camp

After all that virtual school, kids need hands-on learning more than ever. Could these resorts — and their next-level educational programs — be the answer?

BY **RACHEL CHANG** | MAY 14, 2021

Truly in-person learning, on an andBeyond trip. | CREDIT: COURTESY OF ANDBEYOND

Parents everywhere already know that iPads and Zoom calls don't hold a candle to in-person instruction, but the question for many families has been what to do about it. Enter the travel industry: "Many resorts around the world have recognized the challenges of the past year," says Jack Ezon, a member of T+L's Travel Advisory Board and a father of four. "They're setting up work-and-school opportunities for families that blend virtual classes for the children with experiences based on where you are."

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FOR THE AQUATIC ADVENTURER

CREDIT: ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL CRAVEN

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Amanyara, in the Turks and Caicos, has teamed up with Miami's Phillip & Patricia Frost Museum of Science for a series of themed weeks led by the museum's educators. Upcoming sessions include reef rescue in July, coastal conservation in August, and astronomy in November.

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The Most Charming Small Towns in Florida

From coast to coast, these are 10 of the best small towns in Florida.

BY **SKYE SHERMAN** | MAY 20, 2021

Editor's Note: Those who choose to travel are strongly encouraged to check local government restrictions, rules, and safety measures related to COVID-19 and take personal comfort levels and health conditions into consideration before departure.

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How to Enjoy a Relaxing Florida Vacation With Kids (Really!)

VISIT FLORIDA + TRAVEL+ LEISURE

You've been imagining your dream Florida vacation—and now the time has come to turn it into reality. We partnered with VISIT FLORIDA to highlight destinations that combine comfort with unparalleled fun.

The whole family is probably itching to unwind in the Sunshine State. But how do you make sure everyone gets an equal chance to recharge? Whether you've got toddlers, tweens, or teens, Florida offers an incredible diversity of family-friendly experiences. Of course, this doesn't mean a fun-for-kids-only vacation. Adults need a rejuvenating escape, too—and with some luxe options thrown in for a bit of pampering, the whole family can get the Florida vacation they deserve.

Visit a luxury destination the whole family will love

Amelia Island

With two luxury resorts, five golf courses, boutique shops, dining, and spas, Amelia Island offers plenty of upscale activities—even with the kids in tow. The 13 miles of beaches beckon little ones to play in tide pools and hunt for critters while the adults enjoy some toes-in-the-sand relaxation. Rent bikes and tour the historic Victorian neighborhoods, then walk through downtown Fernandina Beach for ice cream, fudge, and a visit to the toy store. Take a trip to Fort Clinch, a fort and state park, where soldiers reenact what life was like back in 1864. Hop aboard a family sunset cruise along the intracoastal waterway for an on-the-water view of salt marshes, local landmarks, and a peek at the wild horses that inhabit Cumberland Island.

Tip: Visit the wonderful Nature Center at the Omni Amelia Island Resort, which offers fun Family Discovery Tours such as crabbing, hunting for shark teeth, and learning about sea turtles.

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MIAMI

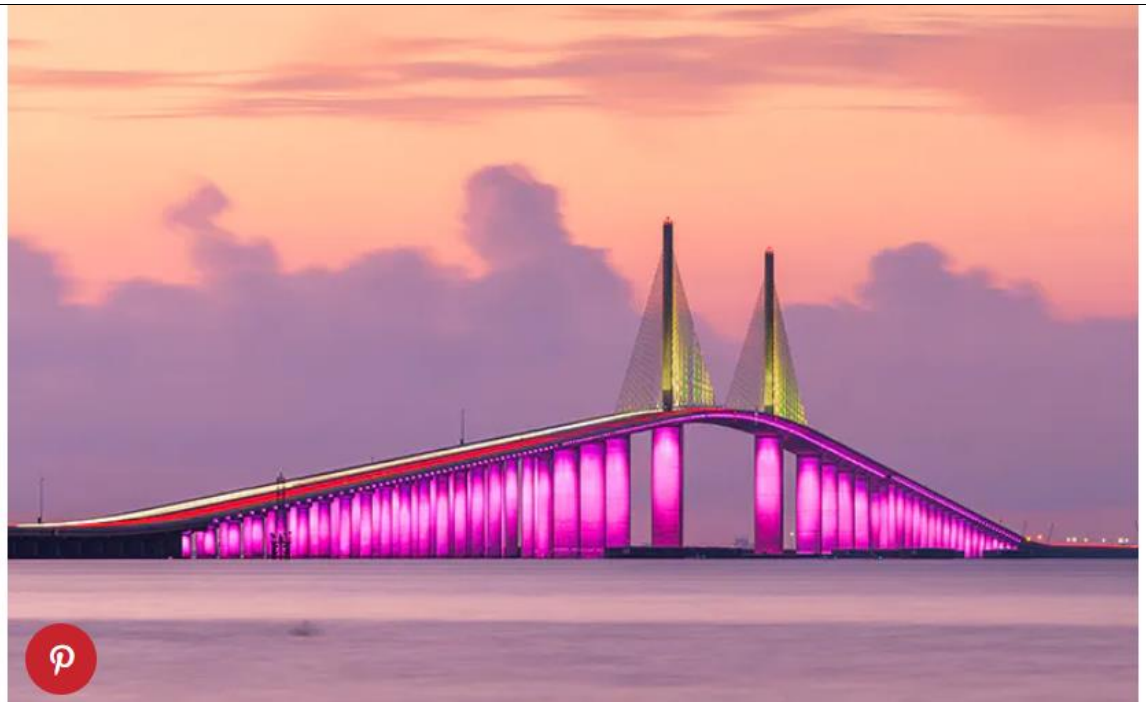
The 10 Most Beautiful Places in Florida

By: Clarissa Buch | May 17, 2021

You haven't truly experienced Florida's beauty until you've visited these 10 destinations. From the northern part of the Sunshine State all the way down to the Keys, these downright gorgeous locations deserve a spot on your travel bucket list.

1. SANIBEL ISLAND

Just off the state's peninsula on the Gulf of Mexico, Sanibel is heaven on a beach. Beyond the miles of crystal-clear waters, there are thousands of patterned seashells waiting to be collected up and down the shoreline. If that isn't quintessential Florida beauty, we don't know what is.



2. ST. PETE

Connecting lower Tampa with St. Pete, the Sunshine Skyway Bridge is a breathtaking introduction to this area of Florida. Once you're in St. Pete, you'll have the best of both worlds: beach and city—all in one place. In fact, downtown St. Petersburg is less than ten miles from St. Pete Beach. And since there's virtually no traffic in the area, the drive is less than 15 minutes.

3. AMELIA ISLAND

Amelia Island is everything you could ever wish for in an upscale beach town. It's home to a Ritz-Carlton hotel (if you're into *that* kind of vacation), but there's also more than 13 miles of super-quiet beaches, adorable bed-and-breakfasts, next-level golf courses and a quirky historic district (with ghost tours!).

4. ST. AUGUSTINE

To explore Florida's rich history, you must make the trip to St. Augustine. Dating back 450 years, this northern Florida town is as charming as it is old (we mean that as a compliment). Situated on the Matanzas River, this European-inspired city marries cobblestone-lined streets and Spanish forts with bright palm trees and sparkling shorelines. If you've been pushing off your trip to Rome or Spain, this Florida spot may be the next best thing (within driving distance, of course).

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12 Best Florida Beaches for Families

Written by Bryan Dearsley

Updated May 20, 2021

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Florida is not called the Sunshine State for nothing. America's favorite playground draws countless visitors from across the continent and overseas, lured by the promise of plenty of sun and fun by the sea.

The same clever marketers could easily have opted for another, equally applicable, nickname: the "Beach State." All told, more than half of the state's coastline - 700 out of 1,200 miles - comprises magnificent stretches of sand. From the Panhandle on the Gulf of Mexico all the way around to Amelia Island on the Atlantic coast, Florida's beaches provide travelers and day trippers alike the perfect setting for a memorable family vacation.

To help you choose the very best stretch of coast for your next vacation, be sure to refer to our list of the best Florida beaches for families.

1. Cocoa Beach

12. Amelia Island

The pristine beaches of Amelia Island are undoubtedly some of the best beaches in Florida, particularly for those traveling with children. Located just 35 miles north of the major city of Jacksonville, this beautiful corner of the Sunshine State is often overlooked for the better-known vacation destinations to the south. Which means, though, there are far fewer crowds and there is plenty more room to spread out your beach towel and for the kids to build sandcastles.

The island, which holds the unique distinction of having been under various flags over the centuries, is where you'll find Fernandina Beach. The name of a seaside city that just so happens to be home to a beautiful stretch of sandy shoreline, Fernandina Beach is a delightful location for a family seaside vacation.

A favorite spot for families is Peter's Point Beachfront Park, popular for its easy beach access with its shallow waters, lovely sand, and even a safe playground suitable for younger children. Older kids will enjoy activities such as swimming, snorkeling, surfing, and beach volleyball. Horseback riding is also available, as is wildlife spotting and bird-watching. There's also plenty of fun to be had in-town, which boasts excellent shopping and dining opportunities, as well as experiences such as buggy rides and ghost tours.

Looking for great luxury accommodations on Amelia Island? Our favorite is the luxurious Ritz Carlton Amelia Island. Just 15 minutes' drive from downtown Fernandina Beach, the resort offers plenty of great accommodation options, not to mention beach activities for kids of all ages - oh, and for parents, too.

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Classic cars bring traffic and tourism back to Amelia Island after COVID-19 idles visitors

Dan Scanlan Florida Times-Union

Published 5:02 a.m. ET May 20, 2021 | **Updated 4:56 p.m. ET May 20, 2021**

View Comments

American classics from the 1920s and 1930s formed a long line at the 2018 Amelia Island Concours. *Dan Scanlan/Florida Times-Union*

One of Amelia Island's biggest event returns to the area this weekend, 14 months after it was literally Florida's last big public event before 14 months of COVID-19 shutdowns.

Now the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance's financial impact is being felt again in a coastal community that normally thrives on tourism after almost everything shut down between last year's event and this one.

Organizers moved the classic car weekend centered in and around the Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island from its usual early March dates to this May weekend for health reasons. But the increasing number of vaccinated Americans means those heading to its weekend events, including the Sunday classic car show on Golf Club of Amelia Island fairways at 4700 Amelia Island Parkway, should prepare for heavier traffic than usual.

Nassau County Sheriff's Office Lt. Dave Griffith estimated about 10,000 people attending, making it "a little busy" on the coastal county roads.

"People want to get out because they haven't done anything for 14 months, and we haven't had any big events like this," Griffith said. "It will be good for the people to get out and see things. There may be a 10- to 15-minute wait on Amelia Island Parkway and South Fletcher Avenue, but we keep traffic moving pretty well."

With every hotel room sold out, Amelia Island Convention and Visitors Bureau President and CEO Gil Langley is predicting a "very big weekend." Also with no Eight Flags Shrimp Festival in 2020 or this year and many other local events canceled in the past year, the concours' economic impact on the community is even more appreciated.

"It underscores how important concours is for us. We were blessed that Bill Warner and his team moved the event," Langley said. "... I think it [attendance] may be a bit stronger, actually. There's a lot of pent-up demand, and to be able to start out the summer season with a world-class event like the concours will speak well for us."

For the past 25 years, the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance has been planned for early March. But the virus saw organizers postpone the event for two months in the hopes that COVID-19 vaccinations would alleviate some concerns.

Concours organizers and the hotel then limited indoor seminars and a gala dinner to half of last year's attendance rates to ensure social distancing. Recently updated CDC recommendations mean a few more tickets are now available for the two seminars, but masks are still being requested indoors.

Warner, who founded and chairs the concours, said it will be a slightly smaller event due to having to adapt to COVID-19, and they will miss some European carmakers who still face pandemic lockdowns. But they are ready.

"With the ever-changing rules and regulations, you get hit from both sides," Warner said. "You get hit from the manufacturers, and there's the state and federal regulations. We have a great governor and the state is realistic [in its response]. We are outdoors and that makes a great difference."

There are four main concours events this weekend.

Some of the 240 classic cars set for the concours' Sunday show take part in a road tour starting at 8 a.m. Friday from the Ritz-Carlton, ending with a free lunchtime display on Centre Street in Fernandina Beach. RM Sotheby's holds its auction on Saturday inside the hotel at 4750 Amelia Island Parkway. The concours' free Cars and Coffee, a local car club show with 450 entries, is from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday on the show field at 4700 Amelia Island Parkway.

Then comes the 26th annual Amelia Island Concours classic car event, set for 9:30 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday on the show field. Noted race car driver and concours honoree Lyn St. James enters the field at 9:45 a.m. Featured classes include supercars of the 1990s, classic marques like Hispano-Suiza, a salute to the Ferrari 275 GTB and Porsche 935s, and a "That's Electric" display of classic and modern electric cars.

Racecar driver and entrepreneur Lyn St. James, the 2021 honoree at the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, is celebrates at a 1985 race at Watkins Glen. *Courtesy Of Lyn St. James*

Langley applauds the "strategic decision" the concours made to postpone the event, giving people time to get vaccinated. Now visitors are coming back. That's on top of research showing the 2020 concours had an almost $30 million economic impact, almost 11 percent more than 2019's event, according to a Research Data Services study.

That's "certainly a bright spot considering the current state of tourism," really helping an area that had an almost total lack of tourists in the area over last year's normally busy summer, Langley said.

The concours' foundation has donated about $3.75 million to Community Hospice and Palliative Care, Spina Bifida of Jacksonville and other charities since 1996.

26th annual Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance schedule

Cars & Coffee at the Concours — 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Golf Club of Amelia Island's 1st, 10th and 18th fairways. Free.

Concours classic car show — 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sunday at the Golf Club Amelia Island 10th and 18th Fairways. General admission is $150 for adults and $60 for youth, active duty military and dependents.

Public parking — Lot A is on Bailey Road off Amelia Island Parkway just west of the Fernandina Beach Municipal Airport. Lot B on South Fletcher Avenue just west of Amelia Island Parkway, and Lot C Parking is on Scott Road. Lot A is $10 on Saturday and $20 on Sunday, with shuttles to and from the show. Lots B and C cost $40, and are a short walk to the show entrance.

For information and events, go to ameliaconcours.org.

jacksonville.com | The Florida Times-Union

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The 17 Best East Coast Family Vacations

BY COURTNEY ELKO
May 26, 2021

The East Coast has a reputation of being fast-paced compared to its counterpart on the West, but maybe that's because there's just so much to see and everyone feels a need to hurry up and see it! Broadway in **New York City**, the (free!) museums and monuments in Washington, D.C., the amusement parks in **Florida**, the quaint, coastal towns in **New England**—phew, we better get started! Check out our picks for the best East Coast family vacations.

1. Philadelphia

Philly is the birthplace of America, so of course it's one of the best places for an East Coast family vacation! **Philadelphia** is a walkable city so it's convenient for families to stay in a hotel while visiting and push a **stroller** around town. Run your teenager up the "Rocky" steps at the Philadelphia Art Museum, revisit history at the Betsy Ross House, and sample the delicious food at Reading Terminal Market. Soft pretzels, cheesesteaks and pork sandwiches are among the must-eats.

16. Amelia Island, FL

Within the northeastern corner of Florida sits **Amelia Island**, where there are 13 miles of white-sandy beaches along the Atlantic Ocean. The resort-barrier island offers families a plethora of outdoor activities—horseback riding, kayaking and biking—in addition to spending time at the beach. Don't forget to make a stop at Fernandina Beach, where 200 years of history has been well preserved in this seaport town and the water sports and boat tours keep families coming back.

Recommended Hotel: **Omni Amelia Island Plantation Resort**

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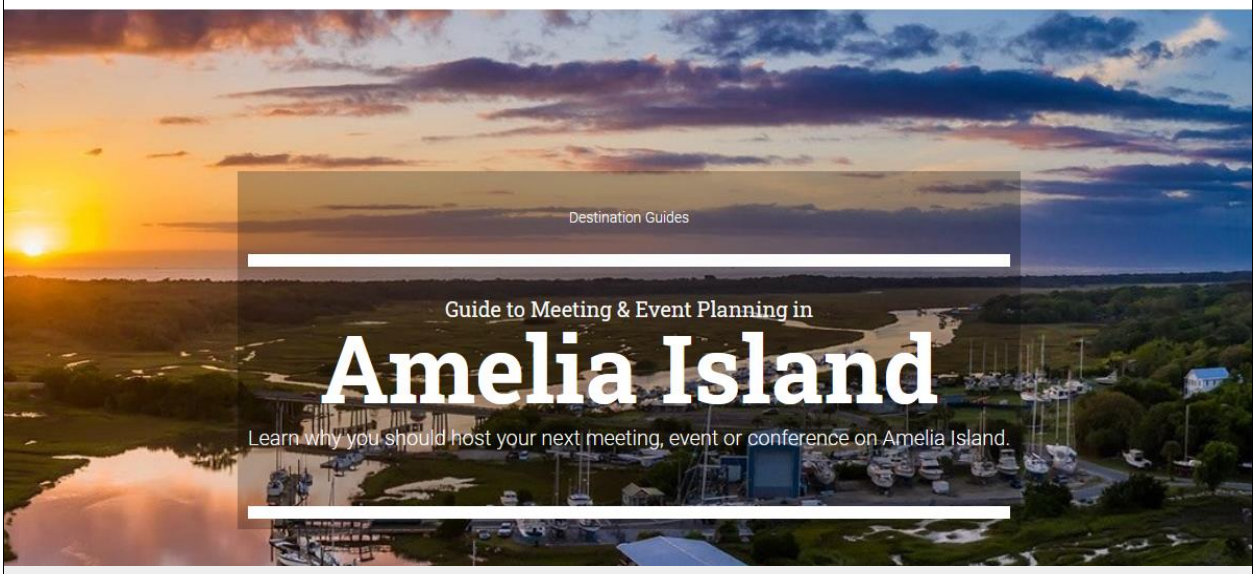


by Allen J. Sheinman May 11, 2021

Why Amelia Island for Your Next Meeting or Event?

Travel Essentials

Taxes: Room tax, 5%; sales tax, 7%; total tax on hotel rooms, 12%

CVB: Amelia Island Convention & Visitors Bureau; (904) 277-4369

Southernmost of the Sea Islands and northernmost of the barrier islands on Florida's Atlantic oceanfront, Amelia Island offers 13 miles of unspoiled coastline, Southern charm, mild temperatures and cool sea breezes year-round. Along with a number of prime venues for meetings, the island's myriad outdoor offerings, including world-class golf, make this a wonderful playground to explore during time spent outside the conference room. All suppliers in the destination follow prevailing COVID-19 precautions.

Get a sense of what makes Amelia Island, Florida, unlike any other meetings destination. The setting is naturally beautiful. The hospitality is exceptionally inviting. And your options for venues, teambuilding and downtime are as abundant as the destination's blue skies and green spaces. Watch the video to see all the ways meetings are island-inspired on Amelia Island.

Meet on Amelia Island, Florida

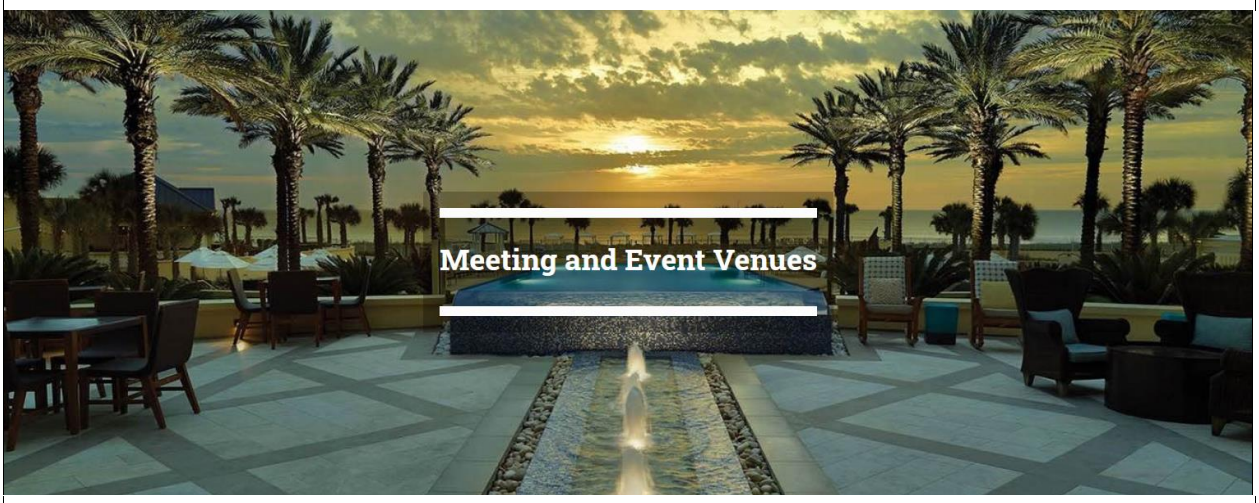
Only On Amelia Island

A well-preserved Civil War-era fort and beautiful natural surroundings are the draws at Fort Clinch State Park. Animal lovers and birders can expect to see the rare Atlantic right whale, egrets, herons, whitetail deer, bobcats and alligators along trails of forest and shoreline, whether traveling by foot, bike or boat.

Brainstorms meet blue skies. Discover the authentic charm, wide-open natural spaces, and unique venues and accommodations of this meetings-friendly barrier island off Florida's northeast coast.

Transportation in & Around the Area

Jacksonville International Airport, 30 minutes from Amelia Island can be accessed by shuttle (from $40), via Uber (from $35), or by car. The island is 15 minutes due east from Interstate 95.



New & Coming Soon to Amelia Island

• The Courtyard Amelia Island, with 105 guest rooms, and Springhill Suites Amelia Island by Marriott,with 134 guest rooms, has debuted. The properties share a spacious pool and outdoor area, along with state-of-the-art meeting space that includes a 4,455-square-foot conference room, plus breakout capabilities for small and medium events.

Meeting Hotels

Omni Amelia Island Resort	30
The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island	15
Courtyard by Marriott Amelia Island	5
Williams House	4

• Celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2021, the iconic 446-room The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island, will soon debut the results of a renovation yielding upgraded rooms and suites, refreshed meeting and event spaces and more.

• At the 404-room Omni Amelia Island Resort, Verandah restaurant has been reinvigorated. The eatery offers casual, yet elevated dining focusing on coastal Mediterranean-inspired seafood and house made pasta.

Amelia Hotel At The Beach	1
Elizabeth Pointe Lodge	1
The Fairbanks House	1
Florida House Inn	1
The Hoyt House Inn	1

FIND EVENT VENUE

• For a relaxed lunch or dinner, The Boat House, in Fernandina Beach's historic downtown, features seafood, steak and cocktails in a relaxing atmosphere (including live music). Having opened in October 2020, the restaurant, including two outdoor patios, can be bought out for groups of up to 200. The BBQ salmon is a favorite here, and diners can select from an extensive wine and beer list.

• In the heart of Fernandina Beach, there's something bubbling. The growing craft beer scene has perculated up to the delight of many serving delicious brews on tap. Mocama Beer Company, named for the dialect that the Ticauma spoke in the very narrow region of the area, combines precision and art for a reliable local taste. Locals and visitors alike will enjoy First Love Brewing, serving pizzas and shared plates alongside their beers.

• Downtown Fernandina Beach will welcome a new duckpin bowling alley in late spring. This fun game resembles bowling, except the pins are shorter and squatter, and players have three throws in which to knock them down. The venue, managed by local entertainment meisters the Poynter Family, will be in the former Bean School of Dance on North 3rd Street.

Additional Meeting & Event Venues

• The 133-suite Residence Inn Amelia Island offers studios, one-bedroom and two-bedroom accommodations, all with fully equipped kitchens. The property has 1,177 square feet of event space able to accommodate up to 117 people.

• In Fernandina Beach, the 122-room Hampton Inn & Suites Amelia Island – Historic Harbor Front, has 1,752 square feet of event space in four meeting rooms, an outdoor pool and a fitness center.

• The Villas of Amelia Island, part of the Omni Amelia Island Resort, feature 350 rental units, ranging in size from one to three bedrooms.

• The 89-room, family-owned Amelia Hotel at the Beach has 840 square feet of meeting space plus outdoor gathering spots that can accommodate up to 45 attendees.

• For more information on meeting and event venues, please visit ameliaisland.com.

Getting Active & Outdoors

• History buffs will enjoy walking around the Fernandina Beach historic district. This well-preserved Victorian seaport village was once a stomping ground for pirates, Gilded Age millionaires, bootleggers, shrimpers and other colorful characters. The Amelia Island Museum of History runs several tours, including along Centre Street, the district's main shopping thoroughfare, or the riveting Murder, Mystery & Mayhem Tour.

• For those interested in maritime and military history, pirates and Spanish treasure fleets, a visit to the Maritime Museum is a must. View artifacts rich in local maritime history, as well as U.S. Navy memorabilia, weapons from multiple time periods, a Soviet era KGB diving suit, an artifact from an expedition to the Titanic and of course, Spanish treasure.

• Amelia Island Trails can recommend places to rent bikes and obtain trail maps that delineate leisure and advanced routes through the island's state parks, marshes, maritime forests and beaches. Most outfits offer GPS-guided tours that lead groups along paved as well as beach paths, with choices of where to stop, explore and eat along the way. Attendees also can enjoy nature on the back of a Segway on the trails via Amelia's Wheels at the Omni Amelia Island Resort.

• Visitors can paddle their way around the island with one of the local kayaking and stand-up paddleboard companies, such as Amelia Island Paddle Surf Co. Expert tour guides will help navigate the waters while sharing the history of the island as your group heads inland to the salty marsh of Talbot Island State Park, Timucan Preserve or Egan's Creek. For those who prefer a little more wind in their hair, Riptide Watersports has two-seat catamarans that let riders take the helm on a river run of the backwaters and marshlands of the area.

• Explore the scenic creeks and rivers of Amelia via On the Water Adventures or Amelia Adventures. Experience wild horses grazing on marsh grasses, and closely observe dolphins, alligators, egrets, herons and other local fauna in their natural element.

• Deep-sea anglers or first-time dock visitors can cast their reels in Amelia's waters and lure in a multitude of fish from trout to flounder. FishingBooker.com can hook you up with everything from shore fishing to a private charter, party-boat or kayak fishing adventure.

No visit to Amelia Island is complete without a horseback ride on the beach. Your attendees have several options:

• Located on a 200-acre preserve where you can observe dolphins, shorebirds and other wildlife, Kelly Seahorse Ranch is one of only a handful of beach horseback riding opportunities in the nation. The gentle, well-trained horses and professional guides give visitors a fun and novel way to enjoy Amelia's white-sand beaches and the beauty of the ocean.

• Happy Trails Walking Horses and Amelia Island Horseback Riding offer private horseback riding along the beach from Peter's Point Park, located just north of The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island.

Amelia Island truly is a golfer's paradise.

• Named a "Silver Medal Golf Resort" by *Golf* magazine, the Omni Amelia Island Resort has 36 championship holes, each course recognized as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary. The property's Oak Marsh, designed by Pete Dye, offers 14 holes that meander along serpentine salt-marsh creeks and through the moss-draped heritage oaks for which the island is famous. Long Point, home of the Omni Amelia Island Resort Golf Academy, incorporates primal marshlands and the towering sand dunes of the Atlantic.

• The Golf Club of Amelia Island features an 18-hole championship course located next to Ocean Place. Designed by Mark McCumber and Gene Littler, the course takes full advantage of the natural terrain, offering spectacular views.

• The 27-hole Fernandina Beach Golf Club is considered one of the finest public courses in the Southeast.

• Amelia River is an 18-hole, 6,823-yard Tom Jackson design, where ball control and accuracy are key to a great round.

• If true thrills are what some attendees crave, Skydive Amelia Island affords a view from 10,000 feet in the air during a one-hour tandem skydive experience. The outfit uses only highly experienced United States Parachute Association-qualified instructors with thousands of tandem jumps between the team.

Attendees could spend hours exploring the colorful shops and galleries of Fernandina Beach's quaint Centre Street and bustling Sadler Road, while The Shops at Omni Amelia Island Resort offer trendy boutiques, home décor and more, along with dining at Marché Burette, a gourmet food market and deli.

• The Amelia Island Culinary Academy in downtown Fernandina Beach offers workshops on gluten-free cooking, Tuscan cuisine, French Provencal and more, conducted by former Ritz-Carlton chef Bill Thompson.

• Resort chefs at the Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island, Salt Cooking School lead participants through classes such as Norwegian cooking, street foods of. Southeast Asia and traditions of Indian cuisine.

• At the Omni Amelia Island Resort, attendees can tour the Sprouting Project, a unique on-site take on sustainability that includes an aquaponics greenhouse, an organic garden, and apiary and a barrel room.

• For more information on activities and attractions, please visit ameliaisland.com.

Top Restaurants on Amelia Island

1. Salt - American
2. Boat House - Seafood
3. Burlingame Restaurant - American
4. Salt Life Food Shack - Eclectic
5. Pogo's Kitchen - Southern
6. España Restaurant & Tapas - Portuguese/Spanish

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HAYWORTH PR

Best Florida Family *Beaches*

story and photos by Marisa Langford of tampamama.com and IG: @TampaMama

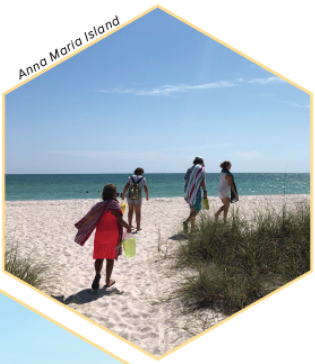
Let's all go the beach beach...let's go to the beach! We are lucky to live like we are on vacation every day here in Tampa. Florida has 825 miles of sandy beaches, so the real question becomes: "Which one?" Let's dive into our favorites. We'll even share some of our secret spots that you can explore with the family this summer.

ANNA MARIA ISLAND | 66 Miles from Tampa

Why: Seven miles of beautiful beaches that locals know are among the best in the state.

How: Find yourself a quaint Airbnb or book a 2–3-bedroom suite with a fully equipped gourmet kitchen at the Mainsail Beach Inn. The free air-conditioned Anna Maria Island Trolley will drop you off right at the beach. Dine at the Sandbar Restaurant where you win a free bottle of champagne if you guess the correct time of the sunset!

What Not To Miss: Doughnuts from The Doughnut Experiment; burritos from Poppo's Taqueria; and a visit to Beach Bums for a bike, paddle board or golf cart rental (car parking is in high demand on the island).


Anna Maria Island

THE PALM BEACHES | 216 Miles from Tampa

Why: Glamor, glitz and golden sands.

How: Book a room at The Breakers and soak up the iconic vibe of staying in one of Florida's first beach resorts built by the father of Florida tourism himself, Henry M. Flagler. Shop in style on Worth Avenue and dine al fresco at the La Goulue.

What Not To Miss: Visit the Palm Beach Zoo, climb to the top of the Jupiter Lighthouse or learn to blow glass at the Benzaiten Center for Creative Arts.

The Palm Beaches

FORT LAUDERDALE | 275 Miles from Tampa

Why: Laid-back luxe in the "Venice of America," which boasts 300 miles of inland waterways under electric blue skies—and guarantees 300-plus sunny days per year.

How: Stay at the Pelican Grand Beach Resort or the W Fort Lauderdale. Relax by day on their private beaches, go paddleboarding with SUP PUP or even learn to surf with Hang Loose Surf School. Las Olas Boulevard is your destination for leisurely brunch and shopping.

What Not To Miss: A Fort Lauderdale Water Taxi ride for a bird's eye view of Millionaire's Row with detailed stories about all the mansions along the waterways.

Ft. Lauderdale Beach

PASS-A-GRILLE BEACH | 38 Miles from Tampa

Why: A perfect day beach with plenty of parking and fewer crowds. Bring your best beach set up and relax as the waves and clouds pass you by.

How: Head out to the beach early to beat the traffic. Or stay in the Don CeSar, which puts you just slightly north on St. Pete Beach.

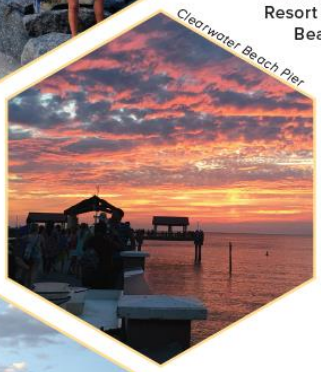
What Not To Miss: Breakfast on the beach at Paradise Grille to start your day and million-dollar after-dinner views from the rooftop deck at The Hurricane to end it.

CLEARWATER BEACH | 30 Miles from Tampa

Why: With a sugar-fine and ultra clean beach, cotton candy-skies, crystal blue waters and a Gulf beach vibe, Clearwater Beach reigns supreme.

How: Book a Gulf view room at the Opal Sands Resort or Sandpearl Resort right on Clearwater Beach to soak up every last ray of sunshine during the day. Take a walk down the beach to find the perfect seashells, enjoy a grouper sandwich from Frenchy's Rockaway Grill and end the night with Sunsets at Pier 60.

What Not To Miss: A private charter with Daisy Mae Charters whose captains will take you out to explore the deep blue gulf and all it has to offer.


Clearwater Beach Pier

CALADESI ISLAND | 24 Miles from Tampa

Why: Only accessible by boat, ferry or kayak, this pristine little island has views for miles and will allow you to escape from the world for an afternoon.

How: Hop on the Caladesi Island Ferry from Honeymoon State Park and enjoy the three miles of beaches, nature trails and picnic pavilions.

What Not To Miss: The Caladesi Discovery Center has an observation deck with the most gorgeous panoramic views of the Gulf of Mexico. Bring your water/walking shoes to take full advantage of the island for the day.

THIS IS ONLY PART OF OUR LIST OF BEST FAMILY FRIENDLY BEACHES IN FLORIDA. FOR ADDITIONAL COVERAGE, HEAD TO TAMPABAYPARENTING.COM.

HAYWORTH PR

COCOA BEACH | 144 Miles From Tampa

Why: Rich in surfing history, this cozy surf town is a fun place to explore with kids, surf boards or boogie boards in tow.

How: Book a weekend on Florida's Space Coast at the Westgate Hotel in Cocoa Beach, close to the famous Ron John Surf Shop and Cocoa Beach Pier.

What Not To Miss: A visit to Kennedy Space Center is a must. Enjoy hotdogs and shaved ice from SeaDogs after you learn to catch some East Coast waves.

PONTE VEDRA BEACH |
207 Miles from Tampa

Why: This East Coast gem boasts stunning views and rich history.

How: Stay at the Ponte Vedra Inn & Club, the epitome of oceanside elegance. Request a beachfront room on the first floor so that you can open your door and literally step out onto the beach. At least on one morning, catch the sunrise over the Atlantic.

What Not To Miss: Take a day trip to America's oldest city, St. Augustine, and explore the cobblestone streets and historic Castillo de San Marcos and Fort Matanzas.

Ponte Vedra Inn & Club

SANDESTIN | 418 Miles from Tampa

Why: To see how the Emerald Coast got its name when you visit the pristine Northwest Gulf Coast and see the waters shimmer in greens and blues.

How: Make lifelong family memories when you stay at the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa and spend hours on the beach with chairs and an umbrella, indoor and outdoor pools with private cabanas, beach volleyball, bike riding, kayaking, golf and more.

What Not To Miss: Just a short (free!) trolley ride away from the resort, the Village of Baytowne Wharf has a variety of restaurants, bars, shops and activities for all to enjoy.

Hilton Sandestin

AMELIA ISLAND |
227 Miles from Tampa

Why: Quiet beaches, natural beauty, unique history and charming seaport character mark this North Florida barrier island.

How: Escape to the 1,350-acre Omni Amelia Island Resort that overlooks the Atlantic to the east and marshland and the Intracoastal Waterway to the west. The island is home to an irresistible mix of spa, golf, dining, shopping and leisure activities.

What Not To Miss: Take a horse-drawn carriage ride through historic downtown Fernandina Beach or cast off on a sunset sail down the Intracoastal Waterway. Kids will enjoy a trip to Fort Clinch State Park, home to one of the most well-preserved 19th century forts in the county.

Amelia Island

ROSEMARY BEACH | 411 Miles From Tampa

Why: Emerald waters, charming architecture and sugar sand beaches make this an enchanting beach for any vacation.

How: It's perfect for a multi-generation vacation, so you'll want to choose the ideal vacation home from the many options available. Book early because they will go fast!

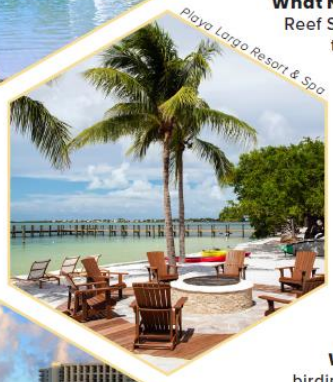
What Not To Miss: Bring your bikes! Once you park your car, you won't want to get back in. The quaint town has a network of paths and boardwalks connecting the beaches, homes, restaurants and more. You can rent them from the Bamboo Bicycle Company too.

KEY LARGO | 342 Miles From Tampa

Why: Diving, snorkeling and the brightest blue waters you've ever seen put Key Largo, the first of the 125-mile-long chain of the Florida Keys, squarely on the must-see list.

How: Take your family getaway to the next level at the Caribbean-esque tropical destination, Playa Largo Resort & Spa. Enjoy snorkeling, paddleboarding or kayaking in the beautiful waters of The Florida Keys with Caribbean Watersports.

What Not To Miss: John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park is America's first underwater preserve that protects the Florida Reef, the only living coral reef in the continental United States. Book a snorkeling trip or a glass bottom boat trip direct from the park's website. Head to the Lazy Lobster for dinner and they will also cook your catch!


Playa Largo Resort & Spa

DRY TORTUGAS NATIONAL PARK |
438 Miles to Key West + 70 Miles West via Boat or Plane

Why: Secluded beaches, snorkeling, birding and even camping at this National Park should be on everyone's Florida beach vacation list.

How: Only via boat or seaplane can you get to this National Park. Book your ferry reservation out of the Key West Terminal on the Yankee Freedom III for a narrated ride over to one of the world's most unique eco-attractions. Passengers have the option to also join a 40-minute guided tour of the historic Fort Jefferson. Your National Park admission is included in the price, as is snorkeling equipment, breakfast and lunch.

What Not To Miss: Made up of seven small islands, this uncharted and enchanting island is one of America's most inaccessible National Parks—and it is in our backyard. Explore the island's historic sites and the incredible marine wildlife underwater. Untouched and preserved, the Dry Tortugas National Park is truly a treasure to be visited.

HAYWORTH PR

FROM Press

The Most Charming Small Towns in Florida

14:50 20 may 2021 Source: travelandleisure.com T+L

Florida attracts millions of visitors every year, but the Sunshine State isn't all Miamis and Orlandos. There are plenty of smaller towns — some off the beaten path — with alluring attributes of their own.

Below, find 10 of the best small towns in Florida with a population size of 15,000 or less. What they lack in size, they make up for in quaint shops, tasty restaurants, easygoing vibes, and enough water and land activities to keep visitors occupied and happy.

Palm Beach

While the greater Palm Beach County is one of Florida's largest and most popular regions, Palm Beach proper — a 10-square-mile barrier island — sports a population of just under 9,000. One of the wealthiest zip codes in America, Palm Beach somehow remains approachable, with beautiful beaches and lots to do within just a few square miles.

Fernandina Beach

© Provided by Travel + Leisure Carol M. Highsmith/Buyenlarge/Getty Images

Located on picturesque and lightly ritzy Amelia Island, Fernandina Beach remains a bastion of easy living. It's found in the greater Jacksonville area, and beloved for its boutiques, restaurants, and thriving wildlife. To top it off, visitors can enjoy 13 miles of quiet beaches.

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The Most Charming Small Towns in Florida

Posted on : 05/20/2021

Travel

Florida attracts millions of visitors every year, but the Sunshine State isn't all Miamis and Orlandos. There are plenty of smaller towns — some off the beaten path — with alluring attributes of their own.

Below, find 10 of the best small towns in Florida with populations of 15,000 or less. What they lack in size, they make up for in quaint shops, tasty restaurants, easygoing vibes, and enough water and land activities to keep visitors occupied and happy.

Palm Beach

While the greater Palm Beach County is one of Florida's largest and most popular regions, Palm Beach proper — a 10-square-mile barrier island — sports a population of just under 9,000. One of the wealthiest zip codes in America, Palm Beach somehow remains approachable, with beautiful beaches and lots to do within just a few square miles.

Visitors can stay at The Breakers or another hotel — some glitzy, some old-school, all refined and historic — ride bikes along Lake Trail for a glimpse of the island's multimillion dollar estates, or shop the designer boutiques and art galleries lining Worth Avenue, often called the Rodeo Drive of the East Coast. The Henry Morrison Flagler Museum, originally home to the railroad tycoon and hotelier himself, is another must-visit in Palm Beach; the Gilded Age mansion was Flagler's wedding present to his third wife.

Anna Maria Island

Considered one of the state's best-kept secrets, Anna Maria Island is home to wide white-sand beaches lapped by emerald and sapphire seas. While the Gulf Coast barrier island's shores are wild, natural, and picture-perfect, visitors also love strolling Pine Avenue to check out the shops, galleries, and restaurants. The wooden Rod and Reel Pier, dating back to 1947, is another Instagram-worthy spot to visit.

Cedar Key

It doesn't get much tinier than Cedar Key, home to approximately 800, but this old-fashioned destination in the Gulf of Mexico is worth a detour. You can hike the trails of Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge, explore a 1920s home and artifacts depicting the area's history as a busy port at Cedar Key Museum State Park, or simply stroll the multilevel houses and mom-and-pop stores perched on stilts in this artsy, humble fishing village. Enjoy the low-key, slow-pace vibe that's totally different from anywhere else in the state, and don't leave without sampling fresh local seafood at one of the many on-the-water restaurants.

Fernandina Beach

Located on picturesque and lightly ritzy Amelia Island, Fernandina Beach remains a bastion of easy living. It's found in the greater Jacksonville area, and beloved for its boutiques, restaurants, and thriving wildlife. To top it off, visitors can enjoy 13 miles of quiet beaches.

Source: Read Full Article

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These Hotel Activities for Kids Are Even Cooler Than Summer Camp

Posted on : 05/15/2021

Parents everywhere already know that iPads and Zoom calls don't hold a candle to in-person instruction, but the question for many families has been what to do about it. Enter the travel industry: "Many resorts around the world have recognized the challenges of the past year," says Jack Ezon, a member of T+L's Travel Advisory Board and a father of four. "They're setting up work-and-school opportunities for families that blend virtual classes for the children with experiences based on where you are."

The key to finding the right fit, says Ezon, is choosing a getaway that syncs up with your children's passions. Here are some of the most impressive options.

FOR THE ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS

At **andBeyond** lodges across Africa, the new WildChild program teaches young guests about animal tracking, life in the bush, anti-poaching efforts, and the impact of climate change on animal populations. At **Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve**, near San Juan, Puerto Rico, teens can direct and star in their own conservation-oriented PSA shot in the surrounding jungle.

FOR THE AQUATIC ADVENTURER

The **Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island**, in Florida, has launched a four-night Barrier Island ecology field trip, during which families can kayak or sail the Intracoastal Waterway while learning about marine ecosystems. Other Ritz-Carlton properties, including those in Santa Barbara, California, and Kapalua, Hawaii, have partnered with Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ocean Futures Society, which has developed a range of activities on subjects such as coral reef ecology, organic gardening, and even media production.

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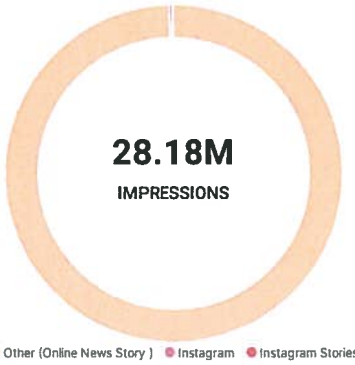

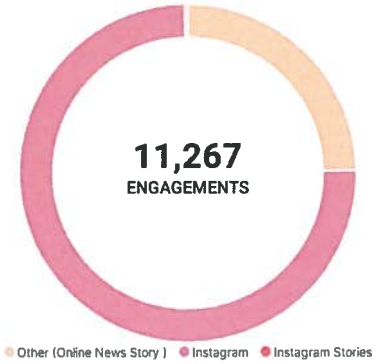

Madison Elkin

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The 23 best hotels in Florida, including boutique beach properties, Disney resorts, and indulgen...

We found the best Florida hotels, from theme park stays in Orlando to art deco accommodations in Miami to island living in the Florida Keys

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22 of the best beach hotels in Florida for an oceanfront getaway
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1
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Suggestions for six less crowded beaches in Florida. Overview of each plus other attractions are nearby

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53,616
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18 of the Best Beaches in Florida for Fun in the Sun
With more than 1300 miles (2170 km) of coastline and over 4000 islands, it's hard to figure out which of the best beaches in Florida to visit. Beaches in
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Get Your Resting Beach Face Ready! These Are the 50 Best Beach and Coastal Towns
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The Best Destinations for an Extended Trip in 2022
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15 Island Vacations Where You Won't Need a Passport

These island getaways have everything you crave—and you won't have to go far to get it.

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12 Charming All Inclusive Resorts in Florida

Florida is packed full of accommodation options catering to varying tastes and budgets – and among them are a large number of all-inclusive resorts. As one of America'...

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6 Historically Black Beaches to Visit This Season

By Donna Torrence During segregation, Black shoreline communities such as Atlantic Beach, South Carolina, and Idlewild, Michigan, were vibrant retreats where families...

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6 Historically Black Beaches to Visit This Season

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Guide to Southeast Road Trips

'Tis the season for sunshine, exploring and making memories! To help you get the most out of your summer, we've teamed up with Go RVing to give you everything y...

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Top Florida Beach Hotels for Your Family Vacation this Summer

Looking for a beach resort for your family getaway? We share the top Florida beach hotels! Learn why these beach hotels are our favorites.

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Jax hospitality industry works to find workers as tourism ramps up

Northeast Florida's hospitality industry features three of the region's fastest-growing careers.

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The Best Destinations for an Extended Trip in 2022

Still holding off on taking your next big vacation? Whether you have a backlog of PTO, a remote job, or just retired, here are the best places to spend your extra time in 2022.

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IMPRESSIONS

481
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

475
IMPRESSIONS

473
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

466
IMPRESSIONS

464
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

7
ENGAGEMENTS

465
IMPRESSIONS

469
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

454
IMPRESSIONS

456
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

1
ENGAGEMENTS

433
IMPRESSIONS

420
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

2
ENGAGEMENTS

406
IMPRESSIONS

403
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

389
IMPRESSIONS

373
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

1
ENGAGEMENTS

389
IMPRESSIONS

520
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

384
IMPRESSIONS

380
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

1
ENGAGEMENTS

375
IMPRESSIONS

372
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

361
IMPRESSIONS

337
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

3
ENGAGEMENTS

361
IMPRESSIONS

359
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

356
IMPRESSIONS

349
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

349
IMPRESSIONS

349
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

338
IMPRESSIONS

342
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

338
IMPRESSIONS

338
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

338
IMPRESSIONS

340
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

331
IMPRESSIONS

327
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

328
IMPRESSIONS

326
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

322
IMPRESSIONS

321
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

321
IMPRESSIONS

317
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

320
IMPRESSIONS

328
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

1
ENGAGEMENTS

311
IMPRESSIONS

310
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

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310
IMPRESSIONS

306
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

View this post on Instagram

View on Instagram

309
IMPRESSIONS

308
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

1
ENGAGEMENTS

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303
IMPRESSIONS

298
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

4,724
IMPRESSIONS

4,135
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

397
ENGAGEMENTS

303
IMPRESSIONS

301
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

2,969
IMPRESSIONS

2,772
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

237
ENGAGEMENTS

122
IMPRESSIONS

95
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

2,580
IMPRESSIONS

2,454
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

250
ENGAGEMENTS

2,141
IMPRESSIONS

2,003
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

180
ENGAGEMENTS

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2,001
IMPRESSIONS

1,872
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

203
ENGAGEMENTS

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Visit Amelia Island
Last week I ventured off to Amelia Island with my pal Rhiana. We had th...
patriciaspalace.com

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Rhiana Wells

19,308
IMPRESSIONS

1,470
ENGAGEMENTS

3,823
IMPRESSIONS

3,515
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

275
ENGAGEMENTS

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2,987
IMPRESSIONS

2,726
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

237
ENGAGEMENTS

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2,558
IMPRESSIONS

2,379
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

198
ENGAGEMENTS

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2,390
IMPRESSIONS

2,167
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

215
ENGAGEMENTS

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2,087
IMPRESSIONS

1,746
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

149
ENGAGEMENTS

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1,865
IMPRESSIONS

1,670
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

131
ENGAGEMENTS

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1,806
IMPRESSIONS

1,634
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

123
ENGAGEMENTS

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View on Instagram

1,792
IMPRESSIONS

1,670
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

144
ENGAGEMENTS

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Travel to: Amelia Island – Wear Bows and Smile

wearbowsandsmile.com

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Tiffany Nguyen

50,306
IMPRESSIONS

47,273
UNIQUE IMPRESSIONS

4,603
ENGAGEMENTS

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