



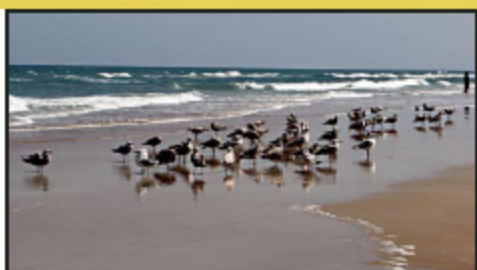
TRAVEL TRAVEL TRAVEL TRAVEL TRAVEL



Life's A Beach!

By Ellen Fostoff

Living in Florida, we're surrounded by beaches. Living in the center of the state, we can reach a beach in an hour's drive!



If you just want to get away for a day or a weekend, you have several choices. Each city's beach has its own character.

I love the beach – the sound of the surf, the seagulls and pelicans flying across the sky, the beautiful sunrises or sunsets against the backdrop of the ocean and sand. I love swimming in the ocean or walking along the beach as my feet get splashed with water. I love exploring an area and finding a pier or jetty to walk on. You see the fisherman waiting for their catch or you see the boats passing by. Picnicking is also great at the beach. It truly is a mini vacation!

Many of us have our favorite beach – whether it's the texture of the sand or the shells you can collect – or the activities nearby. Use the following descriptions to pick a beach you're not familiar with and plan your own mini vacation.

New Smyrna

Beach is a quiet getaway, and oh, so close to home! You can enjoy the tranquility of the beautiful white beach that stretches for more than 13 miles. There are a number of public access points and city and county parks. The beach is open to vehicles from sunrise to sunset in certain areas, and quaint restaurants and shops line the nearby streets.

The area is also a favorite of eco-tourists, tourists that travel to destinations where flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions. The Marine Discovery Center, located at 162 North Causeway, has "hands-on, feet-wet" educational programs for children and adults to raise awareness about the critical importance of Florida's coastal ecosystems with a special focus on the Indian River Lagoon.

If you're looking for something to do the weekend of May 3-4, visit the River Fest. See Community Calendar page 6.

Daytona Beach is even longer with 23 miles of beautiful beach. If you're not familiar with Daytona Beach, you're in for a surprise. You're permitted to drive along the beach. Beach-driving is restricted to specific areas (weather and tide permitting) from one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset.

Pedestrian-only areas are perfect for families with children. Several points of beach access and large public parks are along A1A.

Daytona Beach is well known for its annual events, - the Daytona 500, Bike Week and Spring Break.

Ormond Beach, is a more residential, quiet area just north of Daytona Beach with a beautiful white sandy beach. There are more than a half-dozen beach access points that have restrooms and showers. Beach driving is also a tradition and permitted on a section of the beach. The Birthplace of Speed Park commemorates the area's first automobile timed trial in 1903. This park has a picnic area, restrooms and a dune walkover.

Just 3 miles north of Ormond Beach, on North Beach Street, is Tomoka State Park, known for its huge live oak trees. Camping, fishing, boating, canoeing and picnicking are available. A museum houses artworks by artist Fred Dana Marsh, wildlife displays, Native American artifacts, and exhibits about Florida's history.

For more information, check out these websites:

Volusia County Beaches: <http://volusia.org/beach/>
 Daytona Beach: <http://daytonabeach.com/>
 New Smyrna Beach: http://www.cityofnsb.com/departments_parksrec_facilities.htm
 Ormond Beach: <http://www.ormondbeach.org/>
 Tomoka State Park: <http://www.floridastateparks.org/tomoka/default.cfm>
 Marine Discovery Center: <http://www.marinediscoverycenter.org/>

Adopt A Pet

Are you thinking of adopting a cat or a dog? There are many unwanted animals available, ready for a good and loving home. The SPCA of Central Florida has two locations – Orlando and Sanford. You can visit either facility and walk through to select a dog or cat. You can also visit their website (www.orlandopets.org) to see a sample of cats and dogs available. The list is updated weekly. But, you must go to one of their facilities to adopt an animal.

For additional information about the SPCA and how to adopt your new pet, costs, hours, directions, etc. contact them by phone or visit the website. – www.orlandopets.org.

SPCA of Central Florida Headquarters

2727 Conroy Road Orlando, FL 32839 407-351-7722

SPCA of Central Florida Seminole County

2800 County Home Road Sanford, Florida 32773 407-323-8685



Thumper # 148517, spayed female, 2 yrs old. Silver tabby. Has gorgeous green big eyes. Likes to talk and cuddle. Loves attentions. Since 1/28. I am currently in a foster home. Please contact Brandy at bvarvel@ohs-spcfa.org if you are interested in me. I'd love to meet you!



Roxy, ID: 147796 7 years old, female, spayed. Shepherd mix. Housebroken. Good with other dogs, cats and children. I can go home today. I am sweet and loving. I can sit and shake a paw. I love to be brushed. Kennel: C9 since 4/01/08.