



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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What's new from The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel

Taste of the Islands, Calusa Blueway Fishing Tournament, new flights, attractions news

LEE COUNTY, Fla. (U.S.A.) – In addition to great, year-round weather, shell-drenched beaches and the sparkling Gulf of Mexico, The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel in Southwest Florida continues to provide new experiences for returning guests and first-time visitors. For the latest vacation information, visit FortMyers-Sanibel.com

Taste of the Islands returns this month

Now in its 40th year, the popular Taste of the Islands gives visitors access to special dining opportunities at the Sanibel and Captiva Island restaurants throughout the month of November. A portion of Taste of the Islands proceeds will benefit the Clinic for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife (CROW) on Sanibel Island.

Participants may purchase a taste passport that includes a restaurant guide. Each restaurant will stamp or punch the passport. Only passport holders will be eligible to vote for their favorite restaurant to win the People's Choice Award and be entered into a drawing for prizes, including vacation stays and gift certificates. Passports will be available for purchase at CROW, participating restaurants and <https://tasteoftheislands.org>.

Additionally, every Saturday in November, a CROW Crawl will feature different restaurants. The CROW tent, along with Animal Ambassadors, will be in front of one of the restaurants with event sponsors featured outside other restaurants in the region.

Event proceeds ensure CROW's continued success providing the highest quality care and treatment of injured, ill and orphaned wildlife through state-of-the-art veterinary care. Funds also support public educational exhibits at the Visitor Education Center. For details, visit <https://tasteoftheislands.org>

18th Annual Calusa Blueway Fishing Tournament set for Nov. 13

The Calusa Blueway Kayak Fishing Tournament returns to Matlacha on Nov. 13. All fishing will be catch, photo and release. Anglers are required to fish from paddlecraft on Lee County waterways. Proceeds benefit the Candlelighters of Southwest Florida, a charity that supports children with cancer or blood disorders and their families.

The tournament features door prizes, raffles, food, live music and silent auctions from noon to 4 p.m. Race details and registration can be found on the Calusa Blueway Kayak Fishing Tournament Eventbrite.com page. Weigh-in updates will be posted on Gulf Coast Kayak's Facebook Live page. The tournament is named for the Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail, which is managed by Lee County Parks & Recreation. For more information visit www.fortmyers-sanibel.com/calusablueway

Fort Myers Tip-Off returns Thanksgiving week

The 2021 Rocket Mortgage Fort Myers Tip-Off is back, Nov. 22-24 at Suncoast Credit Union Arena. This year's lineup will feature two, four-team fields for the first time. The eight teams include Bowling Green, Cal, Florida, Milwaukee, Ohio State, Seton Hall, Southern Utah and Yale. Details and tickets: www.fortmyerstipoff.com

Accommodations news

South Seas Resort, Captiva Island, acquired by Timbers Company, Wheelock Street Capital and The Ronto Group

According to a statement issued by the three companies, they “plan to elevate the guest experience with expanded services and amenities while working on future plans to reimagine and restore South Seas Island Resort to its original grandeur.” www.timberscompany.com

New lodging

- **Home2 Suites by Hilton Fort Myers Airport**, Fort Myers, opened June 2021, 102 rooms.
- **Fairfield Inn & Suites Cape Coral/North Fort Myers**, opened June 2021, 109 rooms.
- **Holiday Inn Express & Suites Fort Myers Airport**, Fort Myers, opened February 2021, 101 rooms.

Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW)

Plans have been announced for the RSW Terminal Expansion Project. They include consolidating the Transportation Security Administration checkpoints into a new 16-lane configuration and providing additional seating, concession spaces and a business lounge. In total, more than 164,000 square feet of space will be remodeled and 117,000 square feet of new walkways and concession space will be added to the airport terminal. The project will enhance infrastructure and manage growth while improving the passenger experience at RSW. The \$331-million project is set to begin this month and construction is planned for three years.

www.flylepa.com/RSWTerminalExpansion

New air service at RSW

Air Transat: Montreal (YUL), weekly, seasonal service starts Dec. 16

Avelo Airlines: New Haven, Conn. (HVN), weekly, year-round service starts Nov. 11

Eurowings Discover: Frankfurt, Germany (FRA), weekly, year-round service starts March 28, 2022

New flights at RSW

Alaska Airlines: Los Angeles (LAX), daily, resumes Nov. 19; Seattle (SEA), daily, resumes

Nov. 19

Frontier Airlines: Orlando (MCO), daily, starts Nov. 1

Spirit Airlines: Louisville (SDF), weekly, starts Nov. 17; Manchester, N.H. (MHT), weekly, starts Nov. 17; St. Louis (STL), daily, starts Nov. 17

Sun Country: Duluth, Minn. (DLH), weekly, starts Dec. 17: Green Bay, Wis. (GRB), weekly, starts Dec. 16: Milwaukee (MKE), weekly, starts, Dec. 15: Rochester, Minn. (RST), weekly starts Feb. 3, 2022

United Airlines: Los Angeles (LAX), daily, starts Dec. 16: San Francisco (SFO), daily, starts Dec. 16

News from Punta Gorda Airport (PGD)

Allegiant plans nonstop routes to Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) from Springfield-Branson, Mo. (SGF) beginning Nov. 19. Service from Akron, Ohio (CAK), begins March 2, 2022.

Attractions news

Plan ahead: ‘Ding’ Darling branded beer to launch Dec. 4

Mark your calendars for the rollout of the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS) exclusive, limited-edition Wild Daze Ale on Dec. 4. The launch event starts at 4 p.m. at Fort Myers Brewing Co. in Fort Myers, part of DDWS’ 40th Anniversary Celebration. The refuge WoW (Wildlife on Wheels) mobile interactive experience will be onsite for the occasion, along with food trucks and other activities.

Doc Ford’s Rum Bar & Grille and Bailey’s General Store on Sanibel Island and ‘Tween Waters Island Resort on Captiva Island will be selling the beer, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting the conservation, research, education, and land acquisition efforts at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island www.dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/wild-daze-ale-1

Beach N’ Brews on the beach at Lovers Key State Park

Mark your calendar for Nov. 18 from 5 to 9 p.m. for a night of music and fun on the beach featuring local craft beers and delicious treats from popular food trucks. Enjoy live music, silent auction and a sunset. Hosted by Friends of Lovers Key, proceeds will go to the new Welcome & Discovery Center at Lovers Key State Park.

Participating breweries include Riptide Brewing, Coastal Dayz Brewing, Labelle Brewing, Islamorada Beer Company, Funky Buddha, Tampa Bay Brewing Company and more. Food trucks on site include The DogHouse and Cajun Gringos. Details and ticket information: <https://friendsoflovesskey.org/event/beach-n-brews-craft-beer-event>

Traveling exhibit: “Ravensbrück – We Who Lived There” at Lee County libraries

Our community has an opportunity to experience a traveling exhibit that sheds light on the personal experiences of liberated Holocaust survivors. The exhibition, “Ravensbrück – We Who Lived There” will be displayed in two Lee County Library System branches: East County Regional Library in Lehigh Acres through Oct. 31 and Northwest Regional Library in Cape Coral during November.

Based on interviews that took place immediately after the liberation of Holocaust victims to Malmo, Sweden, this exhibit provides insight into all aspects of life in Ravensbrück - a concentration camp only for women and children. The display, in both English and Swedish, was created by high school students in the Advanced History Program and the IB Diploma Program at Katedralskolan in Lund, Sweden. The exhibition is brought to the U.S. by Better Futures Foundation, a Sarasota-based non-profit.

www.leelibrary.net

Murals commemorate McCollum Hall's history

As Dunbar's historic **McCollum Hall** heads toward preservation, local artists have been working to commemorate the building's history with vibrant outdoor murals depicting its days hosting big-name performers of the "Chitlin' Circuit" in the 1940s and '50s. Besides recalling performances Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong, the murals pay homage to Dunbar community traditions, including the Easter Sunday parade and sidewalk checker matches. The Fort Myers Mural Society oversees the project, which engages a number of local artists as the 12-mural series nears completion. Check details at www.fortmyersmuralsociety.com

To learn more about Dunbar Cultural Landmarks, download the free Florida Stories app and follow the route to learn about historic places in the Dunbar community. The tour follows the route to narrated cultural stops. <https://floridastories.ocell.com/en/fort-myers-dunbar-community-207854.html>

Have fun and save with Fort Myers Sun Saver Passport

Sunshine is just one of many reasons to visit Southwest Florida. Use your mobile phone to access exclusive deals and savings on experiences and find yourself exploring everything under the sun here. The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel has launched a free mobile savings passport. Users have access to exclusive deals on attractions, restaurants and experiences throughout the destination.

To participate:

- Sign up at <https://explore.fortmyers-sanibel.com>
- The passport will be delivered to your mobile phone via text.
- Redeem it on your mobile phone at participating businesses.
- Visit the website for a complete list of attractions, restaurants and experiences.

In the news

- **Forbes:** [How to plan the perfect escape to Captiva Island](#)
- **Atlas Obscura:** [The lasting allure - and bruising challenge - of courting Florida's Silver King](#)
- **Outside:** [The 25 best winter trips in the world](#)

Festivals and annual events

CROW Taste of the Islands, Sanibel Island

Through Nov. 30, 2021

<https://tasteoftheislands.org>

Lee County Alliance of the Arts 4th Annual Arts on Tap, Fort Myers
Nov. 12-13, 2021
www.artinlee.org/ontap

The Laboratory Theater of Florida, Gulf Shore Shakespeare Festival
Nov. 12-14, 2021
www.laboratorytheaterflorida.com

River District Holidays, downtown Fort Myers
Nov. 20-Dec. 31, 2021
www.myriverdistrict.com

46th Annual Holiday Nights at the Edison and Ford Winter Estates, Fort Myers
Nov. 26-Jan. 2, 2022
www.edisonfordwinterestates.org

Luminary 2021, Sanibel and Captiva islands
Dec. 3 on Sanibel Island and Dec. 4 on Captiva Island
www.sanibel-captiva.org

Fort Myers Beach 33rd annual Christmas Boat Parade
Dec. 4, 2021
Salty Sam's Marina
www.fortmyersbeach.org/events/2021-christmas-boat-parade

Gift from the Sea Community Celebration, Captiva Island
Dec. 5, 2021

Holiday Boat-A-Long, Cape Coral
Dec. 18, 2021
Freedoms Park
www.come-to-cape-coral.com/christmas-boat-parade.html

Annual Port Boca Grande Lighthouse and Museum Lighting, Boca Grande
December 2021
www.barrierislandparkssociety.org

37th Annual Cape Coral Festival of the Arts, Cape Coral
Jan. 8-9, 2022
www.capecoralfestival.com

ArtFest Fort Myers, downtown River District
Feb. 4-6, 2022
www.artfestfortmyers.com

Annual Edison Festival of Light Grand Parade, Fort Myers

Feb. 19, 2022

www.edisonfestival.org

Spring training 2022

Boston Red Sox Spring training

17 home games

Begins Feb. 25 with exhibition game against Northeastern University

Ends March 29

JetBlue Park, Fort Myers

www.mlb.com/redsox

Minnesota Twins spring training

16 home games

Begins Feb. 26 against Toronto Blue Jays

Ends March 29

Lee County Sports Complex/Hammond Stadium, Fort Myers

www.mlb.com/twins

Annual Sanibel Shell Show, Sanibel Island

March 3, 2022

www.sanibelshellclub.com

85th Annual Sanibel Shell Festival, Sanibel Island

March 3-5, 2022

www.sanibelcommunityhouse.net/p/84/shell-festival

23rd Annual Southwest Florida Reading Festival, Fort Myers

March 5, 2022

www.readfest.org

ECHO Global Food and Farm Festival, North Fort Myers

March 10-12, 2022

www.echonet.org/events/global-food-and-farm-festival

64th Annual Fort Myers Beach Shrimp Festival, Fort Myers Beach

March 12, 2022

www.fortmyersbeach.org/events/fort-myers-beach-shrimp-festival

12th Annual Fort Myers Film Festival

May 18-22, 2022

www.fortmyersfilmfestival.com

10th Annual “Ding” Darling & Doc Ford’s Tarpon Tournament, Sanibel Island

May 13, 2022

www.dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/tarpon-tournament-1

24th Annual MangoMania Tropical Fruit Festival, Pine Island

July 2022
<http://mangomaniafl.net>

Island Hopper Songwriter Fest
Sept. 16-25, 2022
IslandHopperFest.com

Fort Myers Beach International Film Festival
September 2022
www.fmbfilmfest.com

Roar Offshore, Fort Myers Beach
October 2022
www.roaroffshore.com

35th Annual Oktoberfest, Cape Coral
October 2022
www.capecoraloktoberfest.com

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Editor's note: The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel in Southwest Florida includes Sanibel Island, Captiva Island, Fort Myers Beach, Fort Myers, Bonita Springs, Estero, Cape Coral, Pine Island, Boca Grande & Outer Islands, North Fort Myers and Lehigh Acres. For media assistance, visit www.fortmyers-sanibel.com/media-central