



AllWays Traveller

New Smyrna Beach, Florida

www.allwaystraveller.com

A fine balance of lifestyles in New Smyrna

New Smyrna Beach is located on Florida's Atlantic coastline, near to Daytona Beach and an hours drive from Orlando.

The one time New Smyrna added Beach to its name in 1947, when the city incorporated the coastal community of Coronado Beach, which lies just across the Indian River.

For the visitor, New Smyrna Beach offers two thriving, totally different, downtown areas.

The Canal Street Downtown Historic District has been revitalised in recent years and is a traditional small town main street with a flourishing artist's community.

Across the Intracoastal Waterway, the Flagler Avenue Historic District has 13 miles of coastline and is a lively beach town with surf shops, bars, restaurants and live bands that play into the early hours.

New Smyrna Beach has long been a short break option for Floridians and an escape from the cold northern states for 'snowbirds'.

It also provides a welcome addition to international travellers looking for another destination on a fly-drive vacation to the Sunshine State.

Ashley Gibbins
Managing editor
AllWays traveller



A personal view of New Smyrna Beach



The pelican fly past provides a fitting welcome

By Ashley Gibbins

Relaxing with a beer on my seventh floor balcony at the Atlantic Plaza, the sun had set on a cloudless evening and the beach below me was serenity personified.

The Atlantic was gently lapping the shoreline and a full moon was beginning to emerge.

Things don't get much better than this I said to myself - when they did.

Just feet away from us (on the seventh floor) forty or so pelicans flew past in casual yet clearly defined formation.

As I followed their route into the distance another couple of dozen soared by.

These majestic, almost prehistoric, birds were presumably on their flight path into a night time roost but, whatever, it was a truly memorable moment.

Then, quickly, darkness fell, the moon glistened on the still waters and all was well with the world.

Living beach life to the full

We woke at seven to find the sun blazing on yet another beautiful Florida day -and the pelicans already returned to the beach.



I resumed my balcony watch over the beach below and watched a slow, straggling, procession of cars (which are allowed on this beach between sunrise and sunset) arriving and lining up in neat formation.

For us Europeans, with beaches that tend to err on the narrow side, the thought of vehicles having access might not seem a particularly good idea.

But on the wide expanse of sand, that is New Smyrna Beach, it is just fine.

With each vehicle parked up, its occupants offloaded everything the well seasoned beach lover needs for a family day out.

While in the area



Sea turtles like this Green Turtle visit to feed.
www.indiariverkeeper.org : Andria Westmoreland

The Indian River/Intracoastal Waterway

The Indian River/Intracoastal Waterway winds its way through New Smyrna Beach offering backwater tributaries through mangroves.

These serene trails are good for those wanting to paddleboard, kayak or canoe.

On the way one is likely to see blue herons, snowy egrets, brown and white pelicans, spoonbills and osprey, sea turtles, dolphins, manatees, crabs and rays.

www.paddleboardnsb.com
www.newsmyrnastandup.com
www.eastcoastpaddle.com

Cracker Creek



Cracker Creek in Port Orange on the western side of Spruce Creek is a 20-acre natural sanctuary for a variety of endangered plants and animals that can be seen by canoe, kayak or on foot.

It's a chance to spot alligators, raccoons and turtles; Sandhill Cranes, Yellow-Crowned Night Herons and Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers

www.crackercreek.com



The beach life routine

With so many sun filled days in Florida, the beach life routine in New Smyrna seems well practiced.

When vehicles park up, tailgates are quickly flipped open to enable the offloading and erecting of tables, pagodas, wind sheets and beach umbrellas.

Sun loungers laid out, ice boxes placed into position and sun tan lotion liberally applied.

In and out of the water

With everything sorted, there are those content to doze in the sun, although the youngsters much prefer to build sandcastles or splash about excitedly in the warm water.

The more adventurous paddle out on surf boards, searching for the best breakers, while others choose to walk, jog, cycle or, indeed, hover board along the sand.

Whatever the individual objectives (and the preferred mode of transport) all were making the absolute most of their time on this 13 mile stretch of white beach.



Canaveral National Seashore Park



The Canaveral National Seashore (CANA) is a United States National Seashore between New Smyrna Beach and Cape Canaveral.

Situated on a barrier island, the park's 24 miles of shoreline is the longest stretch of undeveloped public beach on the east coast of Florida.

The park contains 58,000 acres of barrier island, open lagoon, coastal hammock, pine flatwoods and offshore waters and offers the visitor pristine, undeveloped beach, dunes and lagoon offering sanctuary to an abundant collection of plants and animals.

There's the chance to enjoy fishing, boating, canoeing, surfing, sunbathing, swimming, hiking, camping and nature and historical walking trails.

The Eldora State House



Located at Canaveral National Seashore, the Eldora Statehouse is the best remaining example of earlier life along Mosquito Lagoon.

In 1876, the community of Eldora was home to Native Americans and a few woodsmen who lived off the land.

The Statehouse has been rehabilitated and now holds photos and artifacts that tell the story of the town and the people who lived there.

www.nps.gov/cana



Beach town dining and party time

The main gateway to the beach is off Flagler Avenue, which is also the leisure and entertainment district.

Boutiques and galleries line up next to a host of fine dining restaurants, while livelier pubs and bars always do a roaring trade.

Early morning and traditional diners serve great breakfast fare and there are any number of places for lunch.

But Flagler really comes into its own after dark when it becomes the magnet for those with the desire and energy to party into the early hours with many of the bars offering live music.

Flagler Avenue also hosts a wide range of annual events including art and wine walks, music celebrations and food festivals and these enhance the buzz around the place still further.

Getting away from the revelry



For a break from the sea, sand and beach, go back across the water to the Canal Street Historic District, with its vintage stores, art galleries, antique pavilions and boutiques.

With a feel time locked to the 40s or 50s, this main street area offers a more refined but equally enjoyable visit.

Revitalised in recent years, this downtown retains its charm.

Using the same soda fountain for over 60 years the Little Drug Co is an almost cinematic store and diner serving great breakfast and lunch.

The Hub on Canal



Canal Street also enjoys a vibrant artists community focused around the Hub, which is a showcase for a range of artists and artistic styles.

Each month The Hub presents a solo or group exhibition in the Gallery and also serves as an intimate venue for acoustic concerts.

www.thehuboncanal.org

To cap the visit, take in the Corkscrew for lunch or dinner, like everyone else.

www.corkscrewbarandgrille.com

Ponce Inlet lighthouse



The Ponce De Leon Inlet Light Station, comprising a lighthouse tower and museum, is a National Historic Landmark.

The tallest lighthouse in Florida and the second tallest masonry lighthouse in the country, visitors can climb the 203 steps to the top of the 175 foot tower and enjoy beach views and the surrounding inland waterways from the gallery deck.

The adjoining museum charts the history of the lighthouse.

www.ponceinlet.org

Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve

Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve is on 1,637 acres in Port Orange and offers three miles of nature trails leading to an observation tower and onto Rose Bay.

Turtle Mound River Tours

Turtle Mound River Tours depart from JB's Fish Camp for a two-hour river tour to see dolphins feeding, playing and teaching their young at the southern end of the Indian River Lagoon, near the Canaveral National Seashore Park.

www.turtlemoundrivertours.com

The Manatee

The Manatee offers scenic cruises in the protected wetlands and scenic mangrove shores of the Indian River.

www.manateecruise.com



Pat, Jordan and Janine

All aboard the Ondine with friends

Sandwiched in between the two downtowns of New Smyrna Beach is the Indian River and its stretch of the Intracoastal Waterway.

This is an area just yearning to be embraced and there is no better way to do so than aboard the Schooner Ondine.

Skippered by ex-university professor Pat Reed, his wife Janine and son Jordan, the schooner can be hired for private charters.

This is not an all day every day sailing but the chance to go out on the water with a crew that will become friends before the sail has been hoisted.

Pat, Janine and Joran bought the boat in Nova Scotia and sailed her down to Florida and the tales to tell about this voyage, in itself, is worth the 'price of admission'.

I always say it is people that make places and what a great couple of hours we enjoyed aboard the Ondine with Pat, Janine and Jordan.

Within minutes of 'upping anchor' we were trading stories, talking politics and bantering like old friends out for a couple of hours sailing.

The Ondine can be booked for parties of up to six with Pat happy to go where the guests want.

There is no problem taking wine and beer onboard.



A great way to enjoy a spell on the water

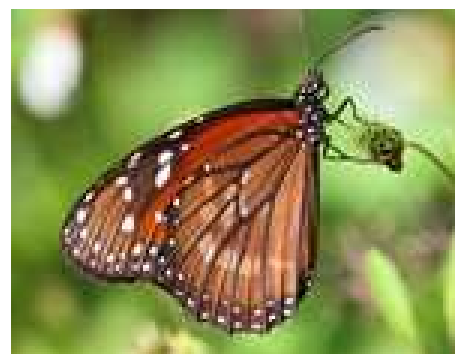
This is a trip with people who do what they do, with people they want to do it with because it's a great way to enjoy a day.

Recommendations don't come high enough.



www.SchoonerOndine.com

The Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge



Experience Florida's indigenous birds and wildlife in their natural habitat at the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge.

The 140,000 acre refuge is home to 500 species of wildlife and birds.

Black Point Wildlife Drive is a scenic seven-mile stretch with numbered stops through trails and observations decks.

The best time to go is early morning or late afternoon.

In the winter, the refuge is home to migratory birds, including 23 species of waterfowl, making it a popular destination for bird watchers.

www.fws.gov/refuge/Merritt_Island



The Marine Discovery Centre

The Indian River Lagoon is one of the greatest estuaries in North America, stretching for 156 miles from the Ponce Inlet in New Smyrna Beach to Jupiter Inlet and designated an Estuary of National Significance.

The Lagoons mangrove forests, sea grass beds, salt marshes and maritime wetlands are home to a huge variety of plant and animal life, including 50 species that are threatened or endangered.

More than thirty percent of all manatees in Florida live in, or migrate through it and the Indian River Lagoon Dolphins are a resident population that live only in the Lagoon.

They are joined by more than 700 species of fish including Tarpon, Redfish, and Snook and 300 species of birds.

The best way to enjoy the Lagoon while supporting a wonderful organisation of passionate volunteers is to book a guided kayak tour or dolphin discovery boat tour through the Marine Discovery Center.

The not-for-profit centre runs initiatives and activities all geared to preserving this fragile natural resource through research, restoration and heightened public awareness of its worth to us all.

We were lucky enough to be taken kayaking by Monica, and got to appreciate the tranquil beauty of the winding backwaters, mangroves and oyster beds.

On the way we spotted osprey, cormorants, herons and egrets while never tiring of the jumping mullet.

For those not inclined to risk a wet bum in a kayak, the dolphin discovery boat tour goes out in search of bottlenose dolphins, manatees, sea turtles and all manner of birdlife.



www.indiariverkeeper.org : Andria Westmoreland

www.marinediscoverycenter.org

All in all



New Smyrna Beach is one of those Florida hide-a-ways that really does deserve checking out.

www.nsbfla.com

The Atlantic Center for the Arts



The Atlantic Center for the Arts is found of 69 acres among palmetto and pine on Turnbull Bay.

It operates an international artist-in-residence facility, bringing world-renowned artists to live and work in the community.

The Center features a 200-seat amphitheater, Black Box Performance Theater, and Dance, Painting, Sculpture and Music Studios.

www.atlanticcenterforthearts.org

The New Smyrna Museum of History

The New Smyrna Museum of History, part of the Southeast Volusia Historical Society, is located just off Canal Street.

It is devoted to the founders of New Smyrna, an intrepid group of indentured Mediterranean colonists, under the leadership of Scottish physician and diplomat Dr. Andrew Turnbull.

www.nsbhistory.org

More information



www.nsbfla.com

A place to stay in New Smyrna Beach : The Atlantic Plaza



By Ann Mealor

Wonderful views of the ocean and beach can be enjoyed from every tastefully decorated apartment in the Atlantic Plaza.

All 22 of the condominiums have balconies allowing guests to make the most of the sights and sounds of the sea from their holiday home.

Not only are guests right on the beach here, but it's only a short stroll to the many fine restaurants, boutiques and bars of vibrant Flagler Avenue.

You couldn't find a better location for exploring New Smyrna Beach, or further afield, as it is only an hour and a quarter drive to Disney.

Our two bedroom apartment was well furnished with glorious views of the Atlantic from the living room and the main bedroom.

Sitting on the balcony, watching the sky change colours and pelicans, in squadron formation, fly past at regular intervals or suddenly dive headfirst into the surf was incredible.



Gazing at the ocean

No matter how long I gazed at the ocean, it was never enough and always left me wanting to stare ever longer.

The fully fitted kitchen and attractive dining and lounge area made eating-in relaxing and pleasurable.

Large supermarkets are close by for stocking up on anything that might be needed or forgotten.

A sea theme pervades the whole condo, giving it a real Florida feel.

Shells and starfish decorate the walls; pieces of driftwood are artistically placed and hessian and rope lamps light all the rooms.

There is a pool deck overlooking the beach, with loungers for soaking up the sun.

Staff are really helpful and can advise on the best places to dine and explain what's on.

There is even a friendly squirrel, who turns up for treats from the reception team.

Atlantic Plaza is a firm favourite with travellers, as shown by the many repeat visitors who, understandably, can't get enough of the place.

www.atlanticplaza.net

The Night Swan B&B



Sitting directly on the Intracoastal Waterway, the Night Swan provides a charming alternative to staying on the beach.

It comprises two refurbished historic homes and a guest cottage, and is cozy yet chic with polished wooden floors, comfortable sofas and eclectic furnishings.

The gardens are immaculate, with colourful borders, tall, shady trees and green lawns scattered with sun loungers for guests to take full advantage of the warm, Florida weather.

Views across the waterway from the large front porch are spectacular and can be enjoyed whilst gently rocking in a white painted chair whilst sipping a glass of wine.

A hearty, gourmet breakfast of homemade muffins, breads, eggs and Greek yogurt is served each morning along with a hot dish such as potato hash, waffles or French toast.

Owned and run by Betsy and Matt Baker, who clearly love what they do, the Night Swan is a favourite with those who appreciate casual elegance and charm and want something a little out of the ordinary.

www.nightswan.com

AllWays somewhere to dine in New Smyrna Beach

The Third Wave Café and Bar

By Ann Mealor

Specialising in fresh and seasonal produce, Third Wave on Flagler Avenue, offers an excellent selection of healthy and tasty dishes in quaint, atmospheric surroundings.

Diners can people watch or surf the web whilst relaxing on the front deck, sipping cappuccinos or indulging in refreshing gelato.

Local craft beers, champagne and quality wines from around the world can be enjoyed in the serene tropical garden, tucked away behind the restaurant.

Fairy lights twinkle amongst the lush, green foliage and small patio tables.

Here we enjoyed a tasty brunch of fresh fruit, classic frittata with feta cheese and avocado, over-easy eggs with fennel sausage and herb roasted potatoes.

The chutneys were also delicious especially the strawberry and basil jam. Neopolitan style pizza is a speciality here too.

A variety of interesting toppings can be mixed and matched including artichokes, honey, kale, dried plums, pomegranate and home-made creamy mozzarella.



Dough is created from scratch and the pizzas are cooked in a wood burning oven.

The menu changes frequently, depending on what's in season, so there is always something new to try.

This family owned restaurant, is a popular addition to Flagler Avenue, and well worth stopping by, particularly during happy hour!

www.thirdwavensb.com



The Boston Fish House

By Ann Mealor

For a tasty, casual dining try the Boston Fish House. Serving New England sea food flown in from Boston, the menu features a great selection of lobster, clam and fish dishes.

The chowder was deliciously creamy and sherry could be tasted in the Lobster bisque.

We chose the hake and flounder for our main course.

Both were full of flavour and perfectly cooked in a very light batter. Fish comes in two sizes, six or eight ounce and served with a good choice of sides.

Our fries were hot and crispy and onion rings large and plentiful.

We also tried the zucchini squash and sautéed onions and the broccoli salad – both dishes complimented the fish very well.



Ideal for those who enjoy eating quality food in fuss-free surroundings.

www.bostonsfishhousensb.com

A snapshot of New Smyrna Beach



AllWays consider : Doing the airport in style with the executive lounge



How often have you heard it said that it is the airport that is the worst part of flying.

The time it takes to get through security, the panic at the thought of checking in late and missing the flight and then the wait in crowded departure areas.

So is the best approach to spend as little time there as possible?

Get there early

No. To avoid the stress and pressure of flying, get to the airport three hours earlier than necessary, check in and clear security in a leisurely 'no sweat' fashion and then head to one of the airport lounges to relax or work in style.



This costs a little more but, with all that lounges offer to make guests comfortable, it is money very well spent



All you need

Comfortable chairs and a good view of the aircraft; Wi-Fi access and power points; a complimentary choice of hot and soft drinks and a selection of fine food and a wide range of newspapers and magazines (for reading there and on the plane).



This makes the airport experience a pleasure rather than a pain.



Nº1 TRAVELLER

Passengers flying out of London (as I tend to do) should opt for the premium lounges by *No.1 Traveller*.

No.1 Traveller offers 'pay-as-you-go' airport lounges at Heathrow Terminal 3, Gatwick North and South Terminals, Stansted and also at Birmingham.

Other services

In addition to its premium lounges, *No.1 Traveller* also offers chauffeur-driven airport transfers for 'driveway to runway', as well as travel spas and bedrooms.

You can then look forward to enjoying the flight in a fit state.



www.No1Traveller.com

AllWays traveller and the International Travel Writers Alliance



AllWays traveller is the consumer travel features 'arm' of the Alliance, providing independent travellers with views of the world from the professional travel journalists in the Alliance

www.allwaystraveller.com



The International Travel Writers Alliance is the world's largest association of professional travel journalists.

www.itwalliance.com



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