

# TourismMarketing Today

The Official Newsletter of Destinations Florida | [www.DestinationsFlorida.org](http://www.DestinationsFlorida.org) | November 2024



Would you like to distribute a PDF of this newsletter to your TDC, elected leaders, or industry members? Visit the Destinations Florida members-only website to get the PDF for distribution: <https://www.destinationsflorida.org/tourism-marketing-today>

## Visit Jacksonville Welcomes 35 New Tourism Ambassadors

Visit Jacksonville recently welcomed 35 new Jacksonville tourism ambassadors after completing the organization's training session.

Nearly 200 individuals have completed the Visit Jacksonville Tourism Ambassador Program since it launched in summer 2023. The program focuses on educating the local community about the Jacksonville tourism industry and the incredible assets the area has to offer. The four-hour training includes classroom instruction, lunch from a local restaurant, and a tour of Downtown Jacksonville led by a local tour guide.



Some of the newest Visit Jacksonville tourism ambassadors proudly display their certificates after completing the Visit Jacksonville Tourism Ambassador Program.

"Becoming a certified Visit Jacksonville tourism ambassador represents having a deeper understanding and appreciation for Jacksonville and sharing that knowledge with others," said Michael Corrigan, president and CEO of Visit Jacksonville.

*TOURISM AMBASSADORS continues on pg. 3*

## Standing Strong Together



As we move through this challenging time, our hearts are with all those affected by Hurricane Milton

and Hurricane Helene. The devastation left in the wake of these storms is a heavy burden on our state, and many of our friends, neighbors, and colleagues are in the midst of salvaging and rebuilding what's been lost.

In times like these, the role of destination marketing organizations becomes clear. We are not just marketers; we are advocates and voices

*E.D.'s MESSAGE... continues on pg. 3*

# Support from our partners makes Destinations Florida's industry & legislative representation possible

## FOUNDING PARTNER



## DIAMOND PARTNERS



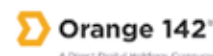
## PLATINUM PARTNERS



## GOLD PARTNERS



## SILVER PARTNERS





# HAPPY Birthday

DT Minich  
November 22

Charlotte Bireley  
November 26



Visit Jacksonville tourism ambassadors take a tour of Downtown Jacksonville as part of their training session.

Trainings are open to the public with a maximum capacity of 30, and those interested can register through Visit Jacksonville's website. If a group of people, such as hotel staff or staff of a local organization, are interested in training, they can reach out to Visit Jacksonville's community outreach manager to schedule a training directly. All trainings are free.

Groups who have completed the training include the City of Jacksonville's Tourist Development Council, Leadership Jacksonville, Downtown Vision Ambassadors, and numerous employees from area hotels and tourism businesses. Visit Jacksonville continues to regularly offer the training for community members and has been contacted by other DMOs for advice on how those destinations can structure a similar training in their area.

**DESTINATIONS  
FLORIDA**  
TourismMarketing  
Today

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Destinations Florida  
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Suzanne Hurst, CAE,  
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Member Database

#### On the Cover

The Palm Beaches are a collection of 39 vibrant cities and coastal towns from Jupiter to Boca Raton, each with its own distinct style. This idyllic getaway boasts quiet and pristine beaches, iconic resorts, award-winning cuisine, world-class shopping, indulgent spas, cultural gems, premier sports, and genuine hospitality at every turn.

#### E.D.'s MESSAGE... continued from pg. 1

for our communities. We are the bridge that connects the world to our local stories of resilience, recovery, and renewal. The task ahead is not easy, but as you've proven time and time again, Floridians are strong, resilient, and unwavering in the face of adversity.

If there is anything Destinations Florida can do to support you, we stand ready. Whether it's sharing resources, amplifying your message, or simply being a listening ear, we are here for

you. Your strength is inspiring, and together we will help our communities recover and thrive once more.

As we continue to rebuild, please mark your calendars for the rescheduled Destinations Florida Annual Meeting on Dec. 4-6. It will be an important moment for all of us to reconnect, share experiences, and craft a united plan for the future. I look forward to seeing you there and building a path forward together.



## Nature Centers and TDT

by Steven M. Hogan

The TDT statute sets out a number of "authorized uses" for TDT funds. One of the things TDT funds can be used for is to build "nature centers."

Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes, provides that counties with populations of less than 950,000 may use TDT funds to "construct, extend, enlarge, remodel, repair, improve, maintain, operate, or promote one or more zoological parks, fishing piers or *nature centers* that are publicly owned and operated or owned and operated by not-for-profit organizations and open to the public." § 125.0104(5)(b), Fla. Stat. (emphasis added)

The term "nature center" is not specifically defined in the statute. At first, this may not seem to matter. After all, the term "nature" is familiar to everyone. But what is a "center"? What counts? Does it include bike paths? Boat ramps? Running trails? Can you fit those within the TDT?

In 2019, the Florida attorney general opined that road shoulders on scenic highways would *not* count as a "nature center" that TDT could fund. Op. Att'y Gen. Fla. 2019-02 (2019). Opinion 2019-02 ties the idea of a nature center to a "focal point" for enjoyment of the outdoors. A road shoulder did not rise to the level of such a "focal point" in the view of the attorney general.

The fact that the road shoulders were contiguous with the scenic highway appeared to be the biggest stumbling block for the attorney general. Because these shoulders were part of the road,

the attorney general could not see how they might be used as a "nature center" within the meaning of the TDT.

With that said, the Florida attorney general has found the term "nature center" to be broad enough to include multi-use pathways for biking, hiking, walking, and running, as well as boat ramps along a river with camping locations. See Op. Att'y Gen. Fla. 201238 (multi-use pathway); Op. Att'y Gen. Fla. 201514 ("blueway" river park with camping facilities; boat ramps).

In the future, proposed uses of TDT funds for "nature centers" should take into account the attorney general's analysis of the "focal point" issue. These considerations may impact whether TDT funds can be used for such projects.

As always, legal counsel should be sought on specific questions, as the facts can change the analysis.

**Steven M. Hogan** is a shareholder with the Ausley McMullen law firm in Tallahassee. Destinations Florida has retained Mr. Hogan to consult with our members on the Tourist Development Tax and related legal issues. You can contact Mr. Hogan at [shogan@ausley.com](mailto:shogan@ausley.com). Nothing in this article constitutes legal advice. Please seek counsel of your own choosing before making decisions that impact yourself or your organization.



Steven M. Hogan



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- Amelia Island Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Clay County Board of Commissioners
- Florida's Historic Coast
- Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches
- Visit Jacksonville

## Amelia Island Launches Inaugural Dining Month to Drive Visitation

Amelia Island launched the inaugural Amelia Island Dining Month (Sept. 1-30) to drive visitation to the destination during a traditionally slower period. Twenty-four of the island's favorite restaurants offered prix fixe dinners for either \$35 or \$55 all month long, showcasing the destination's diverse culinary talent and burgeoning food scene. To make a community impact to those with food insecurities, all participating restaurants pledged \$1 from every order to the Barnabas Center, which provides help and hope to Nassau County residents.

"With the introduction of Dining Month, we're creating yet another reason to visit in September, one of the best times to

enjoy Amelia Island's wide-open beaches, fantastic weather, and unique Florida charm," said Gil Langley, president of the Amelia Island CVB. "There has never been a better time to discover the island's highly regarded and surprisingly innovative dining scene, with the added benefit of supporting a worthwhile charity."



Amelia Island's inaugural Dining Month campaign is a big win for the island!



The Amelia Island CVB and Omni Amelia Island Resort team up for a *Good Morning Jacksonville* segment on First Coast News to promote Amelia Island Dining Month.

To promote Dining Month, Amelia Island executed a fully integrated marketing campaign, including custom event branding and artwork, foodie influencer outreach, and a Yelp Elite Kickoff Party with nearly 70 attendees. To retarget passionate foodies in Central Florida, the CVB also executed a partnership with Carvertise during the opening weekend of EPCOT's Food & Wine Festival. Other campaign elements included local on-air TV appearances, social media giveaways in Tampa and Orlando, advertorials throughout the Southeast U.S., and more.



# BEST of NORTHEAST FLORIDA!

## Clay County Celebrates Milestones

Clay County has a lot to celebrate! First, the Tourism Department launched The Patriots Passport, a military deal promotion that will be featured year-round. The Patriots Passport is a featured partner in the Florida's First Coast of Golf Military promotion featuring Northeast Florida destinations to various military markets all over the country. Not only does The Patriots Passport showcase Clay County's military history and attractions, but

features military deals and discounts.

Each of Clay County's municipalities will be celebrating a milestone within the next five years. Green Cove Springs celebrates their 150<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2024 with special events and the recent unveiling of a new streetscape for the quaint shopping district on Walnut Street.



Celebrations continue with Keystone Heights in 2025, Penney Retirement Community in 2026, Penney Farms in 2027, and Orange Park in 2029. Representatives from each municipality, Clay County, and various organizations meet quarterly to plan and promote milestone celebration events.

These valuable events and more will be featured on *ExploreClay.com* and in various marketing campaigns.



The Patriots Passport showcases Clay County's military history and attractions and features military deals and discounts.

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## Florida's Historic Coast Uses AI Assistant, Targeted Offers, and Digital Media to Promote Their Growing Music Scene and Other Attractions

Florida's Historic Coast continues to thrive with a growing music scene. High-profile performances at St. Augustine's Sing Out Loud Festival (SOL), The Amp, and intimate venues like Colonial Oak Music Park, Café 11, and Prohibition Kitchen are complemented by the Fort Mose Jazz & Blues Series, adding rich diversity to the area's offerings. With more great shows on the horizon, the music scene is booming.

To help visitors explore, the VCB introduced the Know-It-All AI Assistant on [FloridasHistoricCoast.com](http://FloridasHistoricCoast.com). "We are thrilled to harness

the power of artificial intelligence (AI) in this new way," said Susan Phillips, president and CEO of the VCB. "This assistant is unique, as it's customized to our destination's specific information."

Despite economic challenges, the VCB continues to drive steady tourism growth through targeted offers, deals, and digital media campaigns. The *Must-Do Experiences* video series, produced in partnership with CycleHere Films, highlights the best of Florida's Historic Coast. Paired with the Know-It-All Assistant, it enhances trip planning, helping visitors uncover top attractions, dining, and adventures.



Prohibition Kitchen is just one of the venues that regularly showcases live performances on Florida's Historic Coast.



A live music performance at the St. Augustine Amphitheatre is a Must Do Experience on Florida's Historic Coast.

Photo provided by [FloridasHistoricCoast.com](http://FloridasHistoricCoast.com)

## Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches Launches Trails, Tides and Laid Back Vibes Campaign

With the objective of promoting ecotourism, Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches recently launched its newest advertising campaign, Trails, Tides and Laid Back Vibes. Developed by Aqua Marketing and Communications (Aqua), the campaign is primarily focused on outdoor activities like kayaking, hiking, and biking as well as local and state parks and preserves within the destination.



Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches staff pose with models during a production photoshoot at Ragga Surf Café.

Production for the campaign included a three-day video and photoshoot in five unique locations throughout Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches. Local outfitters supplied kayaks and bicycles for the scenes, which included 12 paid talent of various ages. CycleHere Media handled video production for the shoot.

A robust media plan, developed by Aqua, featured a blend of digital and traditional media—billboards, streaming video, paid social, and more. Out-of-market messaging focused on generating

destination awareness in key markets along the I-95 corridor and with online audiences. Demographic targets included leisure travelers, primarily families and couples—ages 50+.

"We're very happy with our latest campaign, Trails, Tides and Laid Back Vibes, which encapsulates the numerous ecotourism activities available in Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches," said Amy Lukasik, executive director of Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches.



One of several digital ads produced for the Trails, Tides and Laid Back Vibes campaign



# BEST of NORTHEAST FLORIDA!

## Visit Jacksonville Wins Cannes Corporate Media and TV Award

At the end of September, Visit Jacksonville's film "A Love Letter From Jacksonville" was awarded a prestigious Silver Dolphin Trophy from the Cannes Corporate Media & TV Awards in the Tourism Films: Destinations – Cities category. The "Love Letter" was directed and shot by filmmaker Carl Rosen and highlights what makes Jacksonville an amazing place. The video debuted during Visit Jacksonville's National Travel and Tourism Week Celebration in May and has received resoundingly positive feedback since then. This is the first

award for the film, and it can be viewed on Visit Jacksonville's YouTube channel.

Annually, the Cannes Corporate Media & TV Awards honor the world's finest corporate films, online media productions, and documentaries in one of the most important film centers: Cannes, France. It is the only festival for corporate films taking place in the city famously known for feature films and advertising productions. The international competition is open to film producers, clients, agencies, and TV stations, as well as students.

This year, submissions for the awards were received from 46 countries. An independent, international jury made up of Oscar and Emmy winners, experts from the fields of marketing and communication as well as the media and film industry, evaluated all submissions.



The opening scene of Visit Jacksonville's award-winning *Love Letter* video

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## Martin County Joins AllTrails Public Lands Program

The Martin County Office of Tourism & Marketing and the Environmental Resource Division recently teamed up to join the AllTrails Public Lands Program in celebration of National Public Lands Day (Sept. 28). Visitors can now explore more than 25 trails across county-managed preserves with ease using the free AllTrails app. This user-friendly platform includes mapped routes, Leave No Trace tips, and real-time alerts to ensure safe outdoor adventures for everyone. [DiscoverMartin.com](https://DiscoverMartin.com)



Dedicated QR codes are being added at trailheads that will directly link to the free app.

## Amelia Island Ranked #4 Top Island in U.S. by *Condé Nast* Readers

Amelia Island has been ranked the No. 4 Top Island in the U.S. in the *Condé Nast Traveler* 2024 Readers' Choice Awards. Amelia Island was the only Florida island recognized in the annual awards and is elated to remain in the Top Five. The Omni Amelia Island Resort and The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island were also both recognized by the readers of *Condé Nast Traveler*, voted No. 4 and No. 14 respectively among the Best Resorts in Florida. [AmeliaIsland.com](https://AmeliaIsland.com)



Amelia Island is honored to again be voted one of the best islands in the U.S.

## Build destination loyalty.

### Start creating personalized experiences for past visitors.

With third-party cookies on the way out, your brand's future actually looks brighter than the Florida sun. Say hello to the sunny first-party data world—connect with real past visitors, foster relationships and bring them back for another Sunshine State adventure!

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## Gulf Coast Host: Educating Hospitality Staff

The Gulf Coast Host program was developed to educate local tourism/hospitality frontline professionals so they are able to answer questions from visitors on all the great things to do and see while visiting Punta Gorda/Englewood Beach and answer questions such as where can I see an alligator, or charter a fishing boat, or go kayaking. The tourism department held a Gulf Coast Host meeting for 40 Punta Gorda Airport administrators, landside, and custodial staff so they will be able to assist visitors flying into the Punta Gorda Airport. [PureFlorida.com](http://PureFlorida.com)



Tourism Film Commissioner Jerry Jones, gift card winner/Punta Gorda Airport staff Mari Hafstad, Punta Gorda Airport Director of Marketing Kaley Miller, and Tourism Project Coordinator Bry Phipps

## Wetumpka Exec Shares Advice: What Sebring Can Expect From HGTV's *Home Town Takeover*

To prepare for HGTV's *Home Town Takeover* Season 3 airing in early 2025, Visit Sebring hosted Shellie Phelps, director of the Wetumpka Chamber of Commerce, for a visit in the Sebring area to share advice. Wetumpka, Ala., was selected by HGTV for *Hometown Takeover* Season 1 in 2020. While in Sebring, Phelps toured the three downtowns (Sebring, Avon Park, and Lake Placid), spoke at four stakeholder meetings, and served as keynote speaker at the Highlands County Insights & Awards Luncheon. [VisitSebring.com](http://VisitSebring.com)



Wetumpka (Ala.) Chamber Director Shellie Phelps visits the Sebring area to share advice and suggestions on how the destination can maximize the HGTV *Hometown Takeover* opportunity, which will air in early 2025.

## Florida's First Coast of Golf Kicks Off NEFL Military Campaign

Tourism industry professionals from across Northeast Florida attended FCCG's launch event for their 13M impression Northeast Florida military campaign, held at Constellation Furyk & Friends on Oct. 1. Special guests included U.S. Navy Captain Howard Wanamaker and Commanding Officer Gregory deWindt, who not only shared their experiences but also discussed the impact of being the third most populous region in the country for active and retired military personnel and the effect that has on NEFL tourism. [Florida-Golf.org](http://Florida-Golf.org)



Florida's First Coast of Golf Military Campaign kickoff

## Jacksonville Awarded Multiple NCAA Championships

The collective work of Visit Jacksonville, Jacksonville Sports Foundation, City of Jacksonville, Edward Waters University, Jacksonville University, and University of North Florida helped secure numerous NCAA events. The University of North Florida will host the 2027 NCAA Division I Men's & Women's Outdoor Track & Field First



Runners compete at a track meet at Hodges Stadium at the University of North Florida.

Round Championships, and Edward Waters University will host the 2027 NCAA Division II Women's Volleyball Championship and 2028 NCAA Division II Men's & Women's Outdoor Track & Field Championships. [VisitJacksonville.com](http://VisitJacksonville.com)





## Florida Keys Traveler Releases Season 2 Podcast

The Florida Keys & Key West launched Season 2 of the Florida Keys Traveler podcast with producer Armchair Productions.

The six-episode documentary-style podcast covers the Keys' five districts with topics on sustainability; the hidden Florida Keys; culture of literature, history, and art; Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Blue Star-certified diving and snorkeling; and fishing. Each episode features interviews with three Keys residents. Season 2 is on more than 20 platforms including Audible, Amazon Music, Apple Podcasts, Pandora, Spotify, and others. [Fla-Keys.com/podcast](http://Fla-Keys.com/podcast)



Season 2 of the Florida Keys Traveler podcast aired in September with six documentary-style episodes.

## Visit Orlando Collaborates With Matador Network to Share Orlando's Unique Neighborhoods With 10M Social Followers

Visit Orlando partnered with Matador Network, a leading online travel publisher, to highlight the unique cultures and experiences only found in Orlando's neighborhoods and districts. Over eight days, Matador captured footage and conducted interviews at 30+ locations, producing 40 short videos, five long videos, and B-roll for Visit Orlando to promote each neighborhood's distinct character. Matador will also share the content across its platforms, reaching more than 10 million followers on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. [VisitOrlando.com](http://VisitOrlando.com)



Visit Orlando showcases the unique experiences found in Orlando's neighborhoods, encouraging visitors to explore these areas while strengthening its connection with the community.

## Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum Opens in Ponce Inlet

A new attraction has opened in the Daytona Beach area for visitors to enjoy—the restored Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum located across the street from the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. Built in the 1880s, this storied hotel stands as one of Volusia County's oldest surviving structures, offering a glimpse into the past with its well-preserved rooms and grounds. Originally a lively boarding house and fishing resort, the property is on the National Register of Historic Places. [DaytonaBeach.com](http://DaytonaBeach.com)



The meticulously restored Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum overlooks Ponce Inlet.

Photo provided by Daytona Beach Area CVB

## Visitors and Locals Discover Miami's Countryside

Throughout November, the Greater Miami CVB celebrates Miami-Dade Farmers Month, inviting visitors and locals alike to explore South Dade's countryside with special deals and experiences—from family fun, animal encounters, and historic attractions to exotic fruit samplings, wines, and local produce. On the edge of the Everglades and less than an hour from the city's urban core, it's the heart of Miami's farming community and a resource for the destination's Michelin-recognized dining scene. [MiamiandMiamiBeach.com](http://MiamiandMiamiBeach.com)



Miami-Dade Farmer's Month

Photo: Greater Miami CVB



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## Keep Walton County Beautiful Hosts Annual Coastal Cleanup Day

Keep Walton County Beautiful hosted an International Coastal Cleanup day in September where volunteers picked up litter along South Walton beaches, helping protect and preserve the counties' coastline and marine wildlife. Keep Walton County Beautiful is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, and the event aimed to get the community involved in the environmental effort. Volunteers gathered trash and debris from three Walton County beach accesses at Miramar Beach, Dune Allen Beach, and Inlet Beach. [WaltonCountyFLTourism.com](http://WaltonCountyFLTourism.com)



Walton County Tourism Director Matt Algarin and Sales Director Karen Morris sign in volunteers at International Coastal Cleanup Day during which roughly 3,500 pieces of trash were cleared from South Walton beaches.

## Visit Tampa Bay Brings the Vibrant, Urban Core of Florida's Gulf Coast to Chicago

Visit Tampa Bay invited visitors of Chicago's Lincoln Square Apple Fest to take a brief respite from the chill of fall and tour the hip, buzzing heart of Tampa Bay. By retrofitting a pair of shipping containers with an augmented reality experience, VTB brought the world-class roller coasters of Busch Gardens® Tampa Bay, the beating heart of Tampa's culture in Ybor City, the serenity of The Florida Aquarium, and the breathtaking waterfront views of the Tampa Riverwalk to one of the largest festivals in the Windy City. [VisitTampaBay.com](http://VisitTampaBay.com)



A pair of Chicago residents are all smiles as they make their way through Visit Tampa Bay's augmented reality activation with the thrills of Busch Gardens® Tampa Bay roller coasters in the background at Lincoln Square Apple Fest on Oct. 5.

## Visit Sarasota County Participates in IMEX

Visit Sarasota County (VSC) participated in the largest trade show for global meetings, events, and incentive travel industries, IMEX America. Their meetings sales manager took advantage of educational and networking opportunities while highlighting the destination alongside a few of VSC's partners. More than 150 countries were represented by exhibitors, increasing VSC's visibility on a global scale. Strategic participation in trade shows helps to spread the good word of VSC's slice of paradise! [VisitSarasota.com](http://VisitSarasota.com)



Visit Sarasota County's booth at IMEX America

## Destin-Fort Walton Beach to Become Home to the World's Largest Artificial Reef

Destin-Fort Walton Beach and the SS United States Conservancy announced that the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners approved a contingent contract to acquire the nearly 1,000-foot-long SS United States with plans to convert the historic ocean liner into the world's largest artificial reef. Once deployed, this historic vessel will become a diverse haven for marine life providing a remarkable opportunity for divers to explore America's flagship. [DestinFWB.com](http://DestinFWB.com)



The SS United States, a vessel widely considered the pinnacle of American post-war maritime engineering and a soaring symbol of her namesake nation, is set to become the world's largest artificial reef.

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## Visit Panama City Beach Takes Home Three IFEA Awards

Visit Panama City Beach is proud to announce its success at the annual IFEA Award Ceremony, where the team brought home three prestigious awards. Their signature event, the Pirates of the High Seas & Renaissance Fest, was recognized with two gold awards for Best TV Promotion and Best Radio Promotion, showcasing the creativity and execution behind their festival marketing. In addition, UNwineD Presented by Publix earned a silver award for Best Single Magazine Display Ad. [VisitPanamaCityBeach.com](http://VisitPanamaCityBeach.com)



Director of Special Events Patrick Stewart poses with the Visit Panama City Beach IFEA Awards.

## New Website Enhances Orlando North, Seminole County's Youth Sports Experience

Orlando North, Seminole County has launched a new and improved website, [PlayOrlandoNorth.com](http://PlayOrlandoNorth.com), specifically designed for youth sports tournament organizers and attendees. The updated site offers enhanced features like streamlined navigation, facility information, and resources to help organizers plan events while showcasing local amenities for visiting teams and their families. This relaunch aims to elevate Seminole County as a premier destination for youth sports. [DoOrlandoNorth.com](http://DoOrlandoNorth.com)



Homepage for [PlayOrlandoNorth.com](http://PlayOrlandoNorth.com)

## CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS • DEADLINE: JANUARY 10, 2025



### Destination Marketing Summit

May 14-16, 2025

The Westin Cape Coral Resort  
at Marina Village  
Cape Coral, Florida

DMO members are encouraged to submit presentations sharing successes and challenges over the past year. Affiliate partners, advertising agencies, and other vendors interested in educating and networking with DMOs are also encouraged to submit presentations.

Submit your presentation online by Friday, January 10, 2025, at:

[DestinationsFlorida.org/2025SummitSpeakers](http://DestinationsFlorida.org/2025SummitSpeakers)



## Discover The Palm Beaches Educates Residents, Stakeholders on Importance of Tourism

To educate local residents and stakeholders about the importance of tourism in the community, Discover The Palm Beaches created a video informing viewers about the value of tourism advocacy. Designed to engage with residents, businesses, community leaders, and elected officials, the video highlights the economic impact of tourism on Palm Beach County while showcasing the broader benefits of local tourism. [ThePalmBeaches.com/advocacy](http://ThePalmBeaches.com/advocacy)



Discover The Palm Beaches has created a video to highlight the value of tourism. Scan the QR code to view it.

## St. Augustine, Florida Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

Hispanic Heritage Month falls in September, and this year the City of St. Augustine commemorated 459 years of Hispanic Heritage with a Founders Day celebration and 100th anniversary celebration of their Sister Cities Partnership with Aviles Spain. The festivities began with the Sept. 8 Founders Day Celebration. Activities and events attracted Hispanic and Latin American journalists, dignitaries, and visitors to celebrate the city's heritage through music, storytelling, and other festivities. [FloridasHistoricCoast.com](http://FloridasHistoricCoast.com)



Each year St. Augustine celebrates its important Hispanic heritage at a reenactment of the arrival and first Thanksgiving of Spanish colonists on Sept. 8, 1565.

### NEW MEMBER RESOURCE:

## "Tourism Marketing in Florida: A Newcomer's Guide"

*The roadmap to mastering destination marketing in the Sunshine State!*

Designed for new team members, staff, board members, and industry leaders, this comprehensive collection of video trainings illuminates the path to success in the world of Florida tourism marketing.

With *Tourism Marketing in Florida: A Newcomer's Guide*, you'll:

- Train your team faster by giving them access actionable strategies to elevate your destination.
- Bring TDC and board members a broader understanding of their role through insider knowledge from Florida's tourism marketing veterans.
- Help members of your industry appreciate the full impact of your efforts by demonstrating how to leverage collaborations for maximum impact.

These first-draft videos were created by DMO expert volunteers to serve you. Please watch them and give us your feedback on how to improve them. We expect to incorporate feedback on another version in a few months.



*Distribute this link and QR code to members of your team, board, and industry as a free benefit of Destinations Florida.*

<https://bit.ly/NewFDM>





## Visit Lauderdale Brings the Beach to Las Vegas for IMEX America 2024

Visit Lauderdale made a bold statement at this year's Worldwide Exhibition for Incentive Travel Meetings and Events (IMEX America), the largest trade show in the U.S. for the global meetings, event, and incentive travel industry. Through an eye-catching digital activation on the exterior of Sphere—the world's largest LED screen, known as the Exosphere—Visit Lauderdale brought the golden shores of Greater Fort Lauderdale directly to Las Vegas. This larger-than-life display highlighted the destination's appeal to meeting planners, incentive travel organizers, event professionals, and thousands of international tourists. [VisitLauderdale.com](https://www.visitlauderdale.com)



Visit Lauderdale's digital activation on the Exosphere was designed to captivate the industry leaders attending IMEX America.

## Alachua County Tourism and Economic Development Departments Merge to Boost Regional Growth

The offices of Alachua County Tourism and Economic Development will merge into one unified department to streamline efforts in promoting tourism and growing the local economy. This realignment will foster collaboration, maximize resources, and enhance both visitor engagement and business development. The combined approach will lead to cohesive marketing strategies, support job creation, and encourage sustainable economic development while supporting the area's tourism-related businesses and attractions. [VisitGainesville.com](https://www.visitgainesville.com)



Downtown Gainesville, home to area business, attractions, parks, and lodging facilities, is one of Alachua County's economic hubs and reflects the spirit of economic growth for Alachua County's newly merged Tourism and Economic Development departments.

## 'Fall is for Foodies' on Florida's Space Coast

The Space Coast Office of Tourism has launched their annual Fall is for Foodies campaign. This year, 15 restaurants are participating across the county with deals and prix-fixe menus through Nov. 24. Participants include Boardroom, Bravo Taco, Coconuts on the Beach, FM Pizza Oven, Goombay's Beachside, Grumpy's Biscuits, Honeysuckle Restaurant, Intracoastal Brewing Company, The Landing Rooftop, The Melting Pot, Ombligo de la Luna, Third Culture Kitchen, Wonder Waffel, Vine & Olive, and Yellow Dog Café. [VisitSpaceCoast.com](https://www.VisitSpaceCoast.com)



Visit [VisitSpaceCoast.com/foodies](https://www.VisitSpaceCoast.com/foodies) for more info.

## Clay County Hosts Scottish Athletics Masters World Championships

The Scottish Masters Athletics International selected the Foundation for Scottish Athletics (F4SA) to host the 2024 Masters World Championship Oct. 5-6 at the Clay County Fairgrounds in Green Cove Springs. More than 200 athletes from across the globe ages 40 and older competed to win the title of World Champion in their respective age divisions. The event also featured a festival with food, merchandise, Scottish clans, and entertainment. [ExploreClay.com](https://www.ExploreClay.com)



The caber toss is one of the signature events of the Scottish championship games.

# Destinations Florida Annual Meeting

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Registration Desk Open  
*Café Quikiriqui at Hotel Haya*

5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Welcome Reception  
*Café Quikiriqui at Hotel Haya*

Thursday, December 5, 2024

8:00 a.m. Registration Desk Open  
*Valencia Ballroom Foyer*

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Networking Breakfast  
*Valencia Ballroom*

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Florida Destination Marketing Industry State of the State Report  
*Valencia Ballroom*

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Fresh Lessons on Successful Leadership at Florida DMOs

11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Networking Luncheon  
*Valencia Ballroom*

Connect

1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Florida's First Sports Facility Funded by a Tourism Improvement District

1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. We're Beyond Generative AI 101, It's Time to Develop a Policy for Your Destination

2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Destinations Florida Board of Directors & Member Forum:  
Tourist Development Taxes and Storm Recovery  
*Valencia Ballroom*

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Miles Partnership Evening Event  
at The Original Columbia Restaurant in Ybor City

miles  
PARTNERSHIP



Friday, December 6, 2024

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Networking Breakfast  
*Valencia Ballroom*

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Destinations Florida Annual Business Meeting  
How Florida Hospitality Jobs Stack Up: A Surprising Comparison  
Tourism Marketing Best Practices from Around the World

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. VISIT FLORIDA Marketing Update **VISIT FLORIDA**

12:00 noon Adjourn

## MEETING LOCATION:

Hotel Haya Ybor City

1412 E. 7th Avenue, Tampa, FL 33605  
(813) 568-1200

## HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:

The Hotel Haya Ybor City is offering a special rate of \$189 per night for Destinations Florida meeting participants.

**Reserve Online:** <https://bit.ly/DF24AnnualYBOR>  
**Or Call:** (813) 568-1200 and mention the group name, Destinations Florida Annual Meeting.

**Important:** Reservations must be made by **Wednesday, November 20, 2024.**

Please make your reservation as soon as possible as the block may sell out quickly.



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Register now at [DestinationsFlorida.org](https://DestinationsFlorida.org)







## Legal Resource for Your DMO

As a member benefit for you, Destinations Florida has retained Steven M. Hogan with the Ausley McMullen law firm to provide insight into the operation of the TDT and related issues to Destinations Florida.

There are several situations where it would be helpful for you to have a legal opinion for your community. As a member benefit, you can speak with Mr. Hogan about the facts and laws at a general level.

To take advantage of this program, feel free to reach out to Steve Hogan at the information below:



**Steven M. Hogan**

Ausley McMullen

850/224-9115

*shogan@ausley.com*



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a publication of



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