

THE Best Family GETAWAYS



MAKING A LIFETIME OF MEMORIES

Summer vacation is more than just a break from day-to-day life — it's important bonding time. Where you go and what you do matters. Whether you choose the beach or the mountains, a cruise or an all-inclusive resort, a destination near or far, the summer memories you create will be the snapshots of your family's life forever. We've culled together some of the best family vacation options around. Try one of these, and you can't go wrong.

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VISIT FLORIDA

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Washington, D.C.
Caption TK

WASHINGTON, D.C.
HOME OF THE FOURTH OF JULY

Give yourself and your family an epic (and educational) Independence Day in the city that owns this celebration: Washington, D.C. From family-friendly festivals and free museums to musical performances and, of course, sensational fireworks, there’s enough to keep to keep the party going for days.

This year, July 4 falls on a Monday; why not come to town on Friday (or before) and spend the week-end gearing up for the dazzling celebration? You’ll find great rates and deals at hotels in local neighborhoods and near the National Mall.

Start your all-American weekend with a trip to the National Archives for a glimpse of John Hancock’s bold signature on the Declaration of Independence. Then drop by the National Museum of American History to see the anthem-inspiring Star-Spangled Banner Flag. Kids will love the National Air and Space Museum’s new Boeing Milestones of Flight Hall featuring landmark planes, rockets and models—including the “Star Trek” Starship Enterprise — hanging from the rafters. Another not-to-miss exhibit: Icebergs, an immersive installation in the National Building Museum. Open from July 2–Sept. 5, 2016, it represents a beautiful, underwater world of glacial ice fields spanning the Museum’s enormous Great Hall.

On Saturday evening, July 2, pack your sleeping bags and join the kids (ages 8 to 12) for a night of adventure at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History, part of the Smithsonian Sleepovers series.

Sunday is the perfect day to visit the National Zoo and see the giant panda cub, Bei Bei, who turns 1 in August. Then enjoy the Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the National Mall, which runs June 29–July 4 and July 7–10, celebrating the Basque Country with parades and cuisine.

Experience the city from a different perspective: take the elevator up to the Washington Monument’s observation deck, or see the sights on a double-decker Big Bus Tours bus. You can view the city by water aboard the Odyssey or Spirit of Washington, or by kayak, which you can rent from the Ballpark Boathouse.

Come the Big Day, rock your red, white and blue and head out early for the National Independence Day Parade along Constitution Avenue; the parade starts at 11:45 a.m., but you’ll want to arrive early to secure a spot for your family to catch all of the floats, marching bands and military units.

Festivities continue on the U.S. Capitol’s West Lawn with “A Capitol Fourth,” a free, 90-minute concert broadcast live on PBS, which features V.I.P. singers and the National Symphony Orchestra. The finale is a rousing rendition of Tchaikovsky’s “1812 Overture” complete with live cannon fire provided by the United States Army Presidential Salute Battery. Gates open at 3 p.m., and the concert begins at 8 p.m.

“A Capitol Fourth” is also the soundtrack for D.C.’s fireworks spectacular on the National Mall. This aerial extravaganza illuminates the city. A multitude of patriotic revelers set up between the Capitol and the Washington Monument, lounging and picnicking. The Lincoln Memorial is another top viewing spot for its photo-friendly perspective. Some determined viewers also venture out to the Jefferson and FDR memorials, where the water in the Tidal Basin reflects the spectacle from the sky.

D.C.
Festivals &
Exhibitions

D.C. Jazz Festival
(June 10–19): Up to 80 jazz performances are staged throughout the city.

National Capitol Barbecue Battle
(June 25–26): A huge two-day food festival on Pennsylvania Avenue with eating contests, local beer, three stages and 30 bands.

Restaurant Week
(Aug. 15–21): Multicourse lunches and dinners at fixed prices are served citywide.

National Book Festival
(Sept. 24): Hosted by Library of Congress at Walter E. Washington Convention Center, headliners include “Cabaret” actor Joel Grey, “Scandal” creator Shonda Rhimes and New Yorker writer Jeffrey Toobin.

National Museum of African American History & Culture
(Sept. 24): Grand opening of the newest museum on the National Mall.

Find out more at washington.org.

FLORIDA
TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT

Award-winning beaches, spectacular sunsets, wild rides — the Sunshine State has it all. While it’s nearly impossible to narrow down the best family hot spots in Florida, there are a few not-to-miss classic destinations and a host of new ones that will make your summer vacation unforgettable.

Florida, of course, boasts about a zillion glorious beaches. A couple of family-friendly standouts: The adorable town of Seaside along the panhandle’s Emerald Coast has sugar-white sand, sherbet-colored cottages and an old-fashioned main street. For a different vibe, St. Augustine — the nation’s oldest city, filled with historic buildings — has miles of gorgeous coastline and barrier islands that create

PUERTO RICO TOURISM

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Fort Jefferson Dry Tortugas.
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Ft Myers Beach.
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some of the most scenic beaches in the state.

On to the action: Get your Nascar fix at Daytona International Speedway, which has just completed a \$400 million overhaul including a huge con-course, interactive breezeway areas, dozens of video screens to capture the on-track action, comfortable seating and a revamped motorsports stadium.

Inspired to try some racing of your own? Buckle up in an electric go-kart racing at the newly opened Sebring Kart Racing in Highlands County, a real outdoor racing experience for adults and children 6 and over. Adult karts reach up to 40 mph, junior carts are limited to 20.

You can't visit Florida and not hit at least one theme park — which means Orlando. Here, there's always something new under the sun, including a host of rides and attractions opening this summer: Universal's Islands of Adventure's offering is Skull Island: Reign of Kong, a "King Kong"-based adventure where kids can explore ancient temples and ward off hostile natives. "Frozen" lovers will thrill to Frozen Ever After, the newest ride at Disney's Epcot Center based on the popular animated film. And get your adrenaline going at SeaWorld's Mako, a new 200-foot-tall hypercoaster reaching speeds of 73 mph as it races along 4,760 feet of steel track. Meanwhile, Legoland has a its share of new goings-on: an animated 4D movie; Build-A-Boat, an attraction at the Legoland Water Park where kids can create and race Lego watercraft through fast-flowing rivers; and Legoland Night Lights, running June 18–31, featuring extended park hours, meet-and-greets with Lego characters and a fireworks display.

It's always good to throw a little education into the vacation mix. Just an hour from Orlando, the Kennedy Space Center is an educational — and fascinating — destination. Vicariously experience the thrills and dangers of America's earliest space missions at the new Heroes and Legends, featuring high-tech elements and special effects including simulated holograms and augmented reality.

The Palm Beaches also make a good home base, with beaches and attractions galore. Visit the Manatee Lagoon – An FPL Eco-Discovery Center, a new, free 16,000-square-foot educational attraction that features hands-on exhibits to learn all about these endangered and unique creatures.

The curlicue islands of Florida Keys and Key West make for a different kind of vacation. See many of Key West's attractions aboard the Conch Tour Train, which has entertained visitors since 1958. Find treasures galore at the Key West Shipwreck Museum. Combine nature with history at the Dry Tortugas National Park in Key West: take a picnic to a secluded beach, and explore historic Fort Jefferson, a former Civil War prison. Or experience tropical birds in action at the Florida Keys Wild Bird Center in Tavernier, which features a new series of interactive exhibits called Wild Bird Explore.

Find out more at visitflorida.com.

THE BEACHES OF FORT MYERS & SANIBEL

FAMILY STYLE

There's an area on Southwest Florida's Gulf that's a little quieter, a little less hurried and a lot less like the rest of the world: The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel. A few days here will bring you closer to nature, and to each other. Less built-up than other parts of the state, this region is rich in eco-friendly entertainment by air, land and sea. Discover nature preserves filled with exotic wildlife; miles of walking, hiking and biking trails; rivers, streams and bays ideal for fishing, canoeing and kayaking; the best shelling beaches in the world filled with more than 400 species of shells; and incredible bird-watching.

Pack a picnic and take a charter cruise across the wide, blue waters of Pine Island Sound north of Captiva to Cayo Costa State Park. One of the older barrier islands, Cayo Costa is a veritable paradise of deserted white-sand beaches, sabal palms, dense cabbage palm forests and gumbo limbo hammocks. Explore the trails threading across this seven-mile long island, or watch the kids run along the white-sand shores to discover sand dollars, whelks and calico scallops. You can even go for a swim in the warm, Gulf of Mexico.

No trip to Captiva is complete without a visit to the over-the-top Bubble Room, a kitsch-filled restaurant with dishes named after old-school Hollywood legends, like Pita Fonda and Errol Fin. Treat the kids to a giant slice of the award-winning Orange Crunch cake. RC Otters Island Eats is another family-friendly dining spot in the heart of Old Captiva Village. Dine inside or out, enjoy live music, and wander through the

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Greater Fort Lauderdale's Atlantic Hotel with kids and beach. Caption TK

quaint village for some souvenirs after your meal.

On Sanibel, spend a day at Bowman’s Beach for some of the best shelling in the world. When your pockets are full of keepsakes, drive or bike through the 6,300-acre J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Preserve, one of the Top 10 bird-watching spots in North America. Take a guided kayak tour along the Great Calusa Blueway, maneuvering through twisty mangrove tunnels and watching for heron, egrets, manatees, dolphin, and unusual birdlife such as the magnificent frigate birds and roseate spoonbills; along the way, learn about the fascinating workings of a mangrove forest and the history of the region’s earliest residents, the Calusa Indians.

For more in-depth marine activities, check out the Sanibel Sea School, which instructs children and adults about marine ecosystems in a unique day-class setting, which includes trips on the Sanibel Sea School bus for serious “field work.” Another Sanibel treasure: Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum. With ties to the Smithsonian Institution, this museum features hundreds of shells from around the world, along with daily children’s activities. When it’s time to eat, stop by the Island Cow for kid-friendly fare, live entertainment and outdoor games.

On a hot day, head to Sun Splash Family Waterpark in Cape Coral, filled with cool slides, tunnels and pools. The nearby Imaginarium Science Center in Fort Meyers, a dedicated hands-on children’s museum and aquarium, has activities and animals (including touch tanks) to entertain your most energetic little family members. For a more transformative experience, the nearby Butterfly Estates surrounds you with hundreds of delicate

butterflies in a climate-controlled environment. Finally, get outside and find more fun in the sun on the smooth sand of Fort Myers Beach. With shallow water and no undertow, it’s one of the world’s safest family beaches. Build sand castles, go swimming and paddle boarding and build lasting memories without a care in the world.

Find out more at fortmyers-sanibel.com.

GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Every generation can find something to love in a vacation getaway in Greater Fort Lauderdale: educational and cultural experiences, sports, shopping, dining — and, of course, fabulous, clean beaches.

Indeed, families of all shapes and sizes will find attractions, restaurants, hotels and resorts that appeal to both kids and kids at heart here — whether it’s the multitude of canal-side dining spots with menus for kids or the beachfront resorts that cater to families, with kids’ clubs, playgrounds, children’s pools and other amenities. You’ll also find great family perks: Through Sept. 30, families can enjoy summer two-for-one deals at attractions and activities throughout Greater Fort Lauderdale.

Where to start? First, slather on the sunscreen and head to the water. When you’re not building sand castles or splashing through the waves, take your budding pirates to Bluefoot Pirate Adventures. Here you’ll set sail on an exciting ocean adventure, complete with a lost treasure, water cannons and a bag of booty.

Drop your children off for a day (or a week) at the award-winning Funky Fish Ocean Camp, at resorts throughout Greater Fort Lauderdale, and they’ll learn how to snorkel in the pool and dive for shells in the shallow ocean, catch a wave on a boogie board and slide along the shoreline on a skim board.

Combine education with outdoor thrills at the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation. Learn about the Seminole Tribe’s rich history at the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, and explore nature trails that lead throughout the beautiful 60-acre cypress dome to a living village. Then head to Billie Swamp Safari down the road for swamp buggy rides and an airboat tour, exploring 2,200 acres of pristine Florida Everglades.

Broward County’s 27 parks offer activities and programs from horseback riding to nature trails. Ride bikes or rollerblade along the Hollywood Beach Boardwalk, a brick-paved two-and-a-half mile thoroughfare that stretches along the Atlantic. Or take guided Segway tours on A1A along Fort Lauderdale beach, or downtown along the “Venice of America,” passing by multimillion dollar yachts and mansions.

For sunshine with a cultural flair, check out the Riverwalk Arts and Entertainment District, a brick-lined promenade set along the city’s stunning New River just minutes from the beach. Grab a bite to eat at a variety of eateries, have a picnic, or take in a world-class show or exhibition at the region’s top performance venues and museums.

**MSC CRUISES
FAMILY TRAVEL
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St. Petersburg/Clearwater.
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When you’re ready to get out of the sun, head to Xtreme Action Park, South Florida’s premier indoor family entertainment center that includes the longest indoor asphalt go-kart track; gas-powered go-karts that reach up to 45 miles per hour; six full-size recreational bowling lanes; and four mini bowling lanes for all ages.

Spend a day of discovery exploring two floors of interactive exhibits at the Museum of Discovery and Science. Don’t miss the Wildlife Rescue exhibit, running through Sept. 5, an interactive experience that involves visitors in compelling stories of animal rescue, highlighting the dedicated people who are taking action and the science that supports their efforts. At the museum’s new EcoDiscovery Center, ride on the Everglades Airboat Adventure, enjoy the playful antics of river otters, experience hurricane force winds in the Storm Center, dig for fossils alongside a giant megalodon shark and see exciting science theater shows.

Your kids can get creative at Young at Art Children’s Museum, where they can make a masterpiece in every gallery, including sculptures and puppets made of recycled materials.

For some live entertainment, bring the family to Shrek the Musical, Jr., performed by young professionals at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts July 1–16. Based on the Oscar Award-winning animated film, this new musical includes a slew of feisty characters, new songs and upbeat dances.

Meanwhile, multiplatinum-selling music artists Demi Lovato and Nick Jonas kick off their North American tour at BB&T on Friday, June 24, 2016.

Find out more at sunny.org.

ST. PETERSBERG/CLEARWATER BEAUTIFUL BEACHES, AND SO MUCH MORE

Ringed by a pristine coastline across eight major barrier islands on the Gulf of Mexico, St. Petersburg/Clearwater is known for having some of the best beaches in the country. It’s also a fascinating mélange of culture, history, museums, shopping and charming seaside communities.

You’re likely to spend most of your time on St. Pete/Clearwater’s many wondrous beaches — from undeveloped, isolated island hideaways to wide, soft city beaches offering all the amenities a beach-loving family could desire. Go camping on a barrier island, go skimboarding or windsurfing, follow a nature trail, fly a kite and explore.

This year, Clearwater Beach was voted the No. 1 U.S. beach on a top tourism website. In addition to its sugar-white sand, calm Gulf waters and lifeguard stations (which make the beach so family-friendly), Clearwater Beach offers parasailing, rides on a “pirate” ship and a long pier stretching into the Gulf. Nightly sunset celebrations on Pier 60 feature live music, street performers and craft vendors.

There’s also lots to do near the beach: Visit Clearwater Marine Aquarium, a working marine hospital and home to Winter, the star in both “Dolphin Tale” movies. Or take a boat charter — there are dozens within walking distance — including Captain Memo’s Pirate Cruise and dolphin watching tours. Because St. Petersburg/Clearwater is home to one of the largest Atlantic bottlenose dolphin pods, you’re almost guaranteed to see dolphins rising above the water.

St. Petersburg’s many interesting old-time Florida communities, each with its own distinct character, are also worth a visit. Spend a day at John’s Pass Village & Boardwalk in Madeira Beach, which has more than 100 retailers, restaurants and attractions. Shop for classic Florida souvenirs in the tin-roofed village, chow down on grouper sandwiches and ice cream al fresco, and hit the boardwalk for a view of (or ride on) the water — fishing charters, water sports rentals and cruise boats await.

Another day, visit Dunedin, whose Celtic heritage can be seen in its colorful landscaping, traditional streetlights and authentic architecture. Its easy-to-navigate downtown is lined with antique shops, art galleries, pubs and fine restaurants. The Pinellas Trail biking and walking path, which winds its way from St. Petersburg to Tarpon Springs, bisects the compact town center, making Dunedin an ideal pit-stop for bicyclists and pedestrians. The nearby Hammock Park trail also adds to the town’s appeal.

Tarpon Springs, on the north end of the peninsula, is another not-to-miss community. It became America’s sponge capital when Greek sponge divers settled there in the early 1900s, and sponge boats continue to operate from its scenic docks. Greek heritage is maintained there with religious, music and food festivals throughout the year.

When you’re in the mood for some world-class (and family-friendly) art, head to downtown St. Petersburg, which is home to six award-winning museums. The most famous is the Dalí Museum, which contains the world’s most extensive collection of paintings by the Spanish master, and offers kids a playful introduction to fine art in the new children’s gallery. Ask for the Surreal Family Guide, which directs kids through the museum and points out interesting facts. Also check out the nearby St. Petersburg Museum of History and Great Explorations, an interactive children’s museum.

Just down the block, the Chihuly Collection at the Morean Arts Center is a stunning, permanent collection of world-renowned artist Dale Chihuly’s unique glass artwork. Enter past an iconic 20-foot sculpture created especially for the site, to rooms of whimsical installations in all shapes and sizes — including the Ruby Red Icicle Chandelier, created for this collection. While toddlers are an obvious no-no, older children and teens will be transfixed. Afterward, watch resident glass artists in action at the nearby Glass Studio & Hot Shop, or even try a bit of glass blowing yourself.

Find out more at visitstpeteclearwater.com.

LEE COUNTY VISITORS

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Puerto Rico Flamenco Beach, Culebra Family.
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MSC Divina Ship.
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MSC CRUISES

DESIGNED WITH FAMILIES IN MIND

As the world’s largest family-owned cruise line, Geneva-based MSC Cruises is the one to pick for the ultimate family vacation. Boasting a fleet of 12 ultramodern ships that sail to more than 150 destinations, MSC Cruises combines fun with cultural and educational experiences make for an amazing family escape.

Every MSC Cruises ship features stylish decor, award-winning entertainment, and authentic, Mediterranean-inspired cuisine. What’s more, MSC Cruises excels in its many dedicated activities for kids of all ages: cooking classes, language courses, costume parades and shows, sports tournaments, scavenger hunts, arts and crafts, and teen disco and karaoke parties. Each sailing features family-friendly shore excursions. And families get great deals: Children under 12 sail free as a third or fourth guest in the same stateroom.

MSC Cruises also partners with best-in-class brands. Lego lovers young and old will thrill to participate in the LEGO Experience Day, which includes LEGO-themed competitions and games and a visit by the LEGO mascot Sailor Walkabout, who roams the ship posing for photos. And don’t worry about schlepping all your baby paraphernalia on board — MSC Cruises provides free Chicco baby essentials such as bottle warmers, strollers, baby carriers and bouncy chairs. Four of the line’s recently renovated ships feature LEGO- and Chicco-designed playrooms, which will also be included on MSC Cruises’ new ships set to debut in 2017.

MSC Cruises also offers the kind of innovative entertainment you won’t find on land or at sea. The cruise line has partnered with Cirque du Soleil to create new, exclusive shows, which will be performed on MSC Cruises next-generation Meraviglia ships, launching in June 2017. You’ll be able to watch these exciting shows in a multimillion-dollar custom-built entertainment and dining lounge perfect for showcasing the acrobatic theater troupe.

Fine food is a centerpiece of every MSC cruise, from formal dining in a choice of restaurants to an extensive buffet with a visible kitchen and dedicated sections covering everyone’s favorite foods. When you want your own private, adults-only meal, MSC Cruises has you covered: children eat from a kids’ menu in the main dining room while parents eat their first course; MSC Cruises youth staff then pick up the children so they can enjoy fun evening activities with other kids their age while the grownups finish dinner.

Even accommodations are family friendly. MSC Cruises’ newest class of ships features the MSC Yacht Club, an exclusive and luxurious ship-within-a-ship accommodation ideal for multigenerational travel. Family members who prefer a quieter, more upscale experience can stay in the MSC Yacht Club, while the rest of the family can enjoy the family-friendly amenities found on a larger ship.

In December 2017, MSC Cruises is expanding its North American fleet with MSC Seaside, which will join MSC Divina in sailing year-round from Miami to the Caribbean. Designed with families in mind, MSC Seaside will include the most interactive aqua park at sea, convertible staterooms that can accommodate up to 10 people, a full size-bowling alley and a kids-only restaurant.

Always wanted your own private island? The Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve, set just 60 miles from Miami, debuts in December 2017. MSC Cruises is working closely with the Bahamian government and ecologists to create this private preserve, which will harmoniously coexist with the local ecosystem. The preserve will be visited by MSC Divina and MSC Seaside, as well as other MSC Cruises’ ships in the Caribbean area, and will include more than 11,000 feet of pristine, family-friendly beach — giving guests lots of space to spread out, relax and explore. The island will also feature a kids’ restaurant, play areas and a zipline, along with family-friendly nightlife including live music and entertainment.

*[Find out more at **msccruises.com**.](#)*

PUERTO RICO

AN ISLAND OF ADVENTURE

Give your kids a Caribbean escape without leaving the country. An easily accessible tropical paradise filled with sites and adventures for all ages, Puerto Rico offers an exotic adventure colorful adventures within the safety of the United States.

Because Puerto Rico is a commonwealth, you don’t need to bring a passport or exchange money, and with some carriers, you can use your cell phone with no roaming charges. And best of all if your Español is rusty, most people speak English.

With its seaside resorts, parks and amusement centers, Puerto Rico virtually invites you for a family

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outing. For golfers young and old, Puerto Rico has more than 20 world-class golf courses with spectacular views. The walled city of Old San Juan, a lively center of history and culture, makes a good home base. Explore the city's colonial architecture and Spanish forts, many of which have been declared Unesco World Heritage sites. Live your pirate fantasies at El Morro, a castle-like fort on the Atlantic; scan the ocean from atop a strategically placed brick tower and explore its shadowy passageways, turrets and fortifications. Enjoy a picnic lunch on its grassy slopes, where kite flying with an ocean view will enchant all ages; you can buy a kite at the street-side refreshment carts outside the park's entrance.

Of the six bioluminescent bays in the entire world, three are located in Puerto Rico. Take the family on a night kayak trip surrounded by "stars" in the water for a truly magical experience.

Another not-to-miss adventure: El Yunque National Forest, the only tropical rainforest in the U.S. Forest System. El Yunque is a tropical wonderland filled with hiking trails, waterfalls, unique plant life and the most spectacular mountain views in the Caribbean. Search for coqui, small but noisy tropical frogs, and watch for flashes of color from the elusive Puerto Rican Parrot. Other top family moments in the 28,000-acre preserve include climbing the Yokahu stone tower, hiking through the lush greenery and splashing around in waterfalls.

Toro Verde Nature Adventure Park in the mountains of Orocovis is an adrenaline junkie's paradise. The park's extensive system of zipline tours includes the new El Monstruo, certified by Guinness World Records as the highest and longest zipline in the world at 7,234 feet long (or 28 football fields) and about 1,200 feet high. For the more adventurous and physically fit, Toro Verde offers tours that combine zip lines with rappelling and horizontal rock climbing.

All that activity is bound to make you hungry. Puerto Rico will satisfy even the most particular palates with its varied and delicious fare, from gourmet fine dining to roadside kiosks. The island is also home to eateries helmed by renowned chefs such as José Andrés and Jean-Georges Vongerichten and local stars such as Mario Pagán and Wilo Benet.

When it's time for a beach day, imagine everything that over 270 miles of coastline can offer. From golden-sand beaches facing the deep blue Atlantic Ocean to the white sands facing the turquoise Caribbean Sea, there is a universe of color, marine life and seascapes awaiting. Flamenco Beach, Culebra Island's most dazzling natural treasure, has been ranked among the top beaches on Earth by a host of travel media. Vieques Island also has numerous beaches that are famous for their clear, crystalline waters and are popular snorkeling destinations. Choose from all kinds of water sports, from scuba diving and surfing to kayaking and paddleboarding.

Find out more at seepuertorico.com.



PALACE RESORTS GIVE THEM THE MOON

If you're looking for an all-inclusive, hassle-free vacation for all ages, pack your bags and head to Moon Palace Golf & Spa Resort in Cancún, or Moon Palace Jamaica Grande in Jamaica. These beachside resorts provide everything your children want, when they want it, without your wallet. And from June to August 31, 2016, book a stay any Palace Resort and kids 12 and under stay free. Another bonus: stay five nights or more and receive a \$1,500 resort credit to use toward spa appointments, wine upgrades, rounds of golf and more.

Both properties team with activities and amenities for every family member: lavish pools, a children's pool with water slides and a Flowrider double-wave simulator that creates perfect waves for hanging 10 or body boarding. While the teens are doing their thing at Wired teen lounge, dance the night away at the chic Noir nightclub. And when it's time to relax, head to the Awe Spa for a pampering, state-of-the-art treatment.

The 12-and-under set gets its own royal treatment at The Playroom. This over-the-top clubhouse includes iPlayrooms for toddlers, a beauty salon for girls to embrace their inner princess, a mini-runway to practice their catwalk, a doll house, a kitchen, an Xbox room and a separate area filled with toys. The Playroom also has a theater with comfy seating and concessions, where kids can mingle while watching movies. Kids can also enjoy tennis lessons, mini-golf, Spanish lessons, treasure hunts, beach soccer, piñata-making, beach camping, kiddie disco, cookie-making, pool games, slumber parties, movie nights and masquerade nights.

Moon Palace Golf & Spa resort recently unveiled a \$100 million renovation, earning a AAA Four Diamond Award for the fifth year in a row. Accommodations include more than 2,400 waterside and garden view accommodations or golf villa suites. Tee off at the Jack Nicklaus signature golf course, choose from a range of cuisine at 14 restaurants, and chill out at 11 bars and lounges.

Opened in July 2015, Moon Palace Jamaica Grande in Ocho Rios has already been awarded a AAA Four Diamond Award. Boasting more than 700 elegant guestrooms and suites — all with breathtaking views of the Caribbean — Moon Palace Jamaica Grande is set along a gleaming 17-acre beachfront, the longest stretch of private beach in Ocho Rios. Relax beside any of five lavish pools and sip a cocktail from a swim-up bar. Wander the upscale gourmet corridor (part farmer's market, part café) and discover a variety of fresh cuisines from around the world. Or choose from four restaurants and six bars and lounges serving up eclectic fare ranging from gourmet Asian and traditional Italian to fresh local seafood.

Palace Resorts is a leader in world-class entertainment. Moon Palace Golf & Spa Resort has hosted concerts by Shakira, Enrique Iglesias, Usher, The Beach Boys and Ricky Martin. In 2016, the Irish rock band The Cranberries is slated to perform August 26 and 27. Moon Palace Jamaica Grande has hosted top artists including Shaggy and OMI, and on July 30, 2016, reggae-pop super group Magic! will take the stage.

At Palace Resorts, everything you need for a fantastic getaway is included: nightly entertainment; world-class dining and delicious snacks; top-shelf liquor brands in all bars, restaurants and in-room minibars; unlimited long distance calls to the U.S. and Canada; complimentary wireless Internet throughout entire property; and — moms, leave your beauty tools at home — beauty industry-leading C.H.I. amenities, including blow dryers and flatirons, in every guestroom.

Find out more at palaceresorts.com.

**GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE
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The Westin Grand Cayman Seven Mile Beach.
Caption TK

THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

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Circled by coral reefs and clear azure waters, the Cayman Islands is one of the Caribbean’s top family-vacation spots. With its superb beaches, endless land-based adventures and “Caymankind” hospitality that has earned it a reputation as the friendliest set of islands in the Caribbean, you’ll never want to leave.

Traveling to Cayman is convenient and hassle-free. There are nonstop flights available from several U.S. cities to Grand Cayman, including from New York, Dallas, Atlanta and Miami. Families traveling through Miami can enjoy a direct flight to the scenic sister island of Cayman Brac via Cayman Airways.

The three islands that compose Cayman — Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman — jump with activities that will keep children of all ages (and their parents) happily occupied. Each island has its own personality: Grand Cayman is the biggest and most cosmopolitan, while Cayman Brac and Little Cayman are pristine, private and picturesque, and just an island hop away via Cayman Airways.

Though Cayman is one of the top scuba diving destinations in world, you can explore its incredible marine habitat without getting wet. The glass-bottom boat from Atlantis Submarines will take you to the teeming shallow reefs and shipwrecks of George Town Harbour, or to coral canyons at 100 feet deep.

Stingray City, in Grand Cayman’s North Sound, is a phenomenon unique to the Cayman Islands. Here adventurous snorkelers and divers can swim among, pet and feed graceful Atlantic Southern stingrays. More adventurous family members can play pirate on a two-hour pirate cruise on the Jolly Roger, an authentic replica of a 17th century Spanish galleon. Aboard the ship, afternoon and dinner excursion participants fire cannons at enemy vessels, make “victims” walk the plank and watch real swordplay. For extra pirate action, visit Cayman in November for the 10-day Pirates Week Festival, an annual spectacle that includes a mock pirate invasion from the sea.

Put down your pirate sword and head onto the ocean to experience the destination’s best watersports offerings. Red Sail Sports, a watersports operator with locations throughout Grand Cayman, will set you up with kayaking, snorkeling, wave runners, water skiing, banana boat rides, sailing, parasailing and windsurfing.

Mix up your visit with a variety of land-based activities that explore the culture and natural beauty of the islands. Learn about the history of the Cayman Islands at Pedro St. James, Cayman’s oldest stone structure and the island’s only remaining late-18th-century residence. Or meander through Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park, filled with breathtaking displays of native flora and fauna. The park also promotes conservation with the Blue Iguana Recovery Programme, dedicated to conserving the indigenous Blue Iguana population.

Discover the most varied landscape in the country on Cayman Brac, a nature-lover’s paradise. The National Trust manages a 180-acre parrot reserve on the bluff; walk along the one-mile nature trail in the early morning and late afternoon, the best times to spot the rare, colorful Brac Parrots.

You’ll also find a host of cosmopolitan experiences throughout the Cayman Islands. Visit the lively

Summer Only in Cayman

Book by June 30 and travel by August 31, 2016, and get a fifth night free when you stay four nights at participating properties. You’ll also find spectacular deals on attractions, dining, adventures and more across all three islands.

Find out more at visitcaymanislands.com.

town of Camana Bay in Grand Cayman, or get creative in a private art class at the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands, available for all ages and skill levels. Savor the best of Grand Cayman’s epicurean delights with Cayman Food Tours’ Taste of George Town Tour, a three-hour food tasting and cultural walking tour highlighting the destination’s array of international cuisine and deep-rooted history.

Choose from a range of accommodations, including resorts, hotels and private condominiums and villas. Kid-friendly properties include: The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman, Grand Cayman Marriott Beach Resort, The Westin Grand Cayman Seven Mile Beach Resort & Spa and the Caribbean Club, to name a few.

SOUTH COUNTY, R.I.

RETURN TO SIMPLER TIMES

Wrapped around the southernmost edge of Rhode Island lies one of New England’s most-loved vacation spots, South County. A nature-lover’s paradise, this scenic area is filled with wildlife preserves, protected parks, and 29 forests that spill down to a hundred miles of beautiful, sandy beaches.

Pack up the kids and a picnic and enjoy the tangy salt air at any of 20 sweeping, shimmering beaches, including sheltered bays with calm waters lapping against a tranquil shoreline, perfect for fledgling swimmers and watersports enthusiasts alike. While away the summer days building sandcastles, riding the waves on boogie boards,

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South County Surf Competition.
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surf-casting and digging for clams. Stroll along the shoreline and discover winsome beachfront cottages and inns, and friendly roadside vendors selling the freshest seafood, locally grown produce and piping-hot fruit pies.

Here you can enjoy the great outdoors in a variety of ways: hike the many scenic trails, kayak a winding river or a shady cove, taste fresh-from-the boat seafood, bike to places of undisturbed beauty, spot birds and wild-life in the saltwater wetlands, and practice your swing at 16 public golf courses. South County’s dedication to nature preservation not only ensures vacationers mile after mile of pristine coastline, it also guarantees some of the best nature walks in America.

Much of South County’s popularity stems from its old-fashioned charm. Discover historic inns and bed & breakfasts that take you back to the Colonial- and Victorian-era South County. Regional history thrives at local museums such as the South County Museum, Gilbert Stuart Birthplace and Smith’s Castle, while summer stock theater productions delight audiences at the charming Theatre By The Sea.

Return to simpler times at a farm, ride a horse, visit a water park or attend one of South County’s many summer festivals. The South County Hot Air Balloon Festival, July 22-24, 2016, promises to thrill all ages as balloons of all colors and shapes fill the sky.

Find out more at southcountymi.com or call 800-548-4662.

THE RESORT AT
LONGBOAT KEY CLUB
A FAMILY PARADISE

There’s a reason that The Resort at Longboat Key Club — located on a barrier island just off the coast of Sarasota — is considered the gold standard for families looking for a beachfront view and activities for everyone.

When you arrive at this 410-acre property, set amid perfectly manicured gardens and emerald-green golf courses along the Gulf of Mexico, it’s hard to know what to do first. The pristine white-sand beach beckons; there you can explore the shore from paddleboards and kayaks, or simply relax under the sun-filled sky. Children ages 5 to 12 can make friends at Camp Loggerhead, which offers arts and crafts, beach walks, turtle talks and themed evening events with friendly counselors. The resort’s concierge will also happily refer you to babysitting services for those times when you want to enjoy a private romantic dinner.

Spend the rest of your time in full vaca-

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The Resort at Longboat Key Club.
Caption TK

tion mode. Bring the family to a beachside yoga class or choose from among 50 wellness classes at the Mind & Motion Studio. Relax by the tropical pool, complete with friendly waitstaff ready to fill your cocktail or dining requests. Rejuvenate mind and body at The Spa, where you can also enjoy a mother-daughter mani-pedi. Complimentary shuttle service will take you to the resort’s 291-slip marina for a fishing adventure or sunset cruise. When it’s time for a bite, check out the resort’s eight onsite restaurants and lounges, offering everything from casual to fine dining.

The Resort at Longboat Key Club is also among the top golf and tennis destinations in the country, with the 45 holes of golf and 20 Har-Tru courts at the award-winning Tennis Gardens. Take a private lesson or enroll your junior sports enthusiast in a sports camp.

The luxurious accommodations include two-bedroom suites with full kitchens, so morning coffee or a late-night snack are as easy as if you were home. The best part? Private balconies provide a perfect view, whether overlooking the beautiful sunsets of the Gulf of Mexico, the stunning greens of the golf course or the tropical lagoon where dolphins play at sunrise and sunset. Now that’s paradise.

Find out more at longbeachkeyclub.com.

HILTON HOTELS & RESORTS A FAMILY-FRIENDLY TROPICAL ESCAPE

With a collection of family-oriented hotels and resorts filled with fun-filled activities throughout the Caribbean, Hilton has a property in nearly every sun-kissed destination: the Bahamas, Aruba, Barbados, Cartagena, Curaçao, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad.

Sun, sand and sea — there’s no better setting for a family vacation than the islands of the Caribbean. Bring the kids and hit the beach; build sandcastles and hunt for seashells; explore the beautiful Caribbean water with snorkeling adventures. Whatever hotel or resort you choose, your entire

family will have a fun, safe and truly memorable experience. And Hilton shows its love to families with a variety of activities, discounts and amenities, including a host of customized extras and kids clubs.

Just a few examples of what Hilton’s family-friendly properties offer: At the Hilton Curaçao, nestled in picturesque Piscadera Bay, families relax on two private beaches while children can enjoy an outdoor play area, a giant outdoor chess board and mini-golf. At the tranquil oceanfront resort of Hilton Barbados, families can enjoy two private beaches, snorkeling or sightseeing, while kids have their own children’s program.

A few great Hilton deals: Book the Leisure Escapes Package, and receive a \$50 resort credit for every night of your stay. Use your on-property credit for dining, shopping, relaxing, and more. Book your Caribbean Hilton escape directly through hiltoncaribbean.com and receive a host of benefits, including guaranteed best rates; official Hilton Honors Points; no booking fees; the option to pay only at check-in; and easy cancellation.

Find out more at hiltoncaribbean.com or call 800-HILTONS (445-8667). ●



Hilton Aruba at sunset.
Caption TK

SOUTH COUNTY TOURISM COUNCIL
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RESORT AT LONGBOAT KEY
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