

# Experience!

the City of Fort Myers

*There's always something happening in the City of Palms*



DESTINATION   
MAGAZINE

SPECIAL SECTION

February 3 & 4  
Opening Night Feb 2

**ArtFest**  
FORT MYERS

Southwest Florida's Premier Art Festival



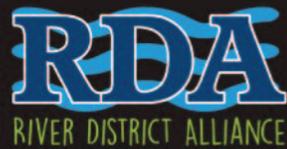
See Art  
Love Art.  
Buy Art.

# GET DOWN. HERE.

## Downtown Fort Myers River District



[www.FortMyersRiverDistrictAlliance.com](http://www.FortMyersRiverDistrictAlliance.com)



### DIRECTIONS TO DOWNTOWN

**1-75:** Exit 141 (FL-80/Palm Beach Boulevard), head West 5 miles. **SOUTH ON US 41/TAMIAMI TRAIL:** Exit right after Edison Bridge on Edwards Street. **NORTH ON US 41/TAMIAMI TRAIL:** Before bridge, stay right on Main Street.

**WHERE TO PARK WHEN YOU GET DOWN**

Experience City of Fort Myers Special Edition published by ArtFest Fort Myers, Inc. in collaboration with River District Alliance and the City of Fort Myers. Copyright 2018/2019, all rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or duplicated without written permission from publisher. All artist artwork and photography retains their copyright and may not be reproduced or duplicated without written permission from the artist, photographer and publisher.

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 Convention  
 Bureau



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Welcome  
 to the City of Fort Myers...  
 The City of **Palms**

Meet the Mayor



*As Mayor of the City of Fort Myers, I would like to extend a warm welcome to first-time visitors, as well as to those who have visited our City time and time again. We are proud of our history, and excited about all that's new. Please take your time to explore all the many aspects of Fort Myers. And if you see me while you are out and about, please stop and say "Hello."*

Warm regards,  
 Randall P. Henderson, Jr.  
 Mayor, City of Fort Myers

Nestled along the Caloosahatchee River, the City of Fort Myers is a perfectly-sized waterfront city bustling with activity grown from its rich heritage and looking forward to its vibrant future.

Retaining its small-town heritage with six unique neighborhoods there are a myriad of family-friendly options to explore, learn and play at museums, parades, festivals, theaters, music, parks, historical sites, restaurants and art galleries.

The wide, sparkling river provides spectacular vistas with waterscapes highlighted by scenic bridges, boats of all sizes, diverse birds and marine life. The Fort Myers' River District is known as Southwest Florida's most authentic and friendliest downtown filled with eclectic boutiques, art galleries, live theater, diverse dining options and some of the world's most magnificent sunsets along the riverfront.

*Enjoy a friendly, welcoming, hang-with-the-locals "real Florida", experience in the City of Palms.*



## Edison Festival of Light

Thomas Edison's genius and many contributions to modern technology are an important part of the world's history. The Edison Festival of Light includes weeks of celebration to honor Mr. Edison for his works and his love of Fort Myers where he wintered from 1885 until his death in 1931.

The 80th Annual Edison Festival of Light is the result of year-long planning by a strong community volunteer network. There is something for everyone and events include the internationally award winning Science and Inventors Fairs, STEMtastic & Day of Discovery, Junior Fun Run & Parade, Food Truck/Craft Beer Rally, Crafts on the River, 5K Race, Classic Car Show, a Mutt Strutt



*Illuminate, innovate, celebrate!*

about their latest books or what makes a story idea click. Buy books and have them autographed by the author.

Children will be captivated by the authors, illustrators, storytelling and crafts. Each child attending will receive a free book. Adults will find new and favorite authors and engaging discussions and topics. Everyone will learn about the amazing free resources available through the Lee County Library System.

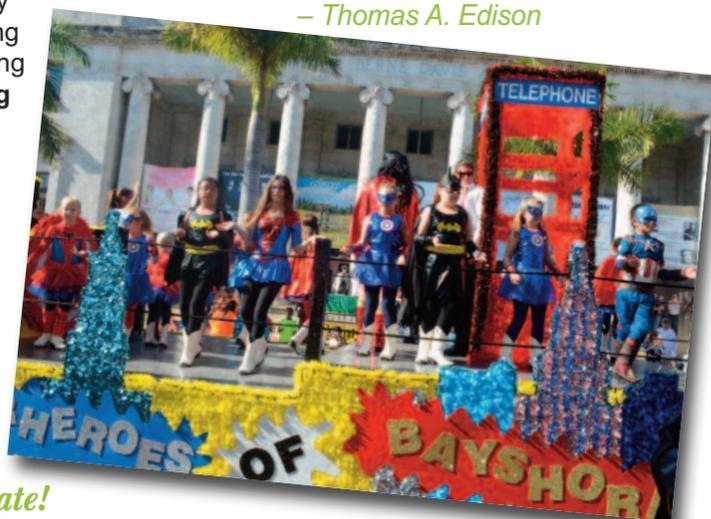
The festival is free to the public and was named a **Top 20 Event in the Southeast United States** by the *Southeast Tourism Society!*

Meet and mingle with the Southwest Florida Reading Festival's best-selling authors at Evening with the Authors Friday, March 2. This is an exclusive event with limited space. Paid reservations are required by February 24. Find more information and reserve seats at [ReadFest.org](http://ReadFest.org).



*"I find my greatest pleasure, and so my reward, in the work that precedes what the world calls success."*

— Thomas A. Edison



## experience Southwest Florida's PREMIER FINE ART Festival

FREE Admission  
SATURDAY & SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd & 4th • 10am-5pm  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd • 6-9pm  
DOWNTOWN FORT MYERS RIVER DISTRICT  
GOOGLE MAP OR GPS: EDWARDS DRIVE FORT MYERS

Browse the Online Art Gallery @ [ArtFestFortMyers.com](http://ArtFestFortMyers.com) to see the exceptional quality.



Photo by Jamie Kuser



Meet Gabi, your ArtFest guide

text Hi to 45426 or on our website for answers to all your ArtFest questions! when she is back from holiday vacation on January 5th!

Southwest Florida's premier fine art festival is a **must attend event**. Always the first weekend in February, ArtFest Fort Myers' three-day art extravaganza fills the downtown Fort Myers riverfront with exceptional art in a variety of mediums and prices from nationally recognized artists from across the country and around the world.

You'll get to meet the artists, face to face. Knowing their stories behind the art is one of the great joys of buying art directly from the artist.

Children's art activities, great food, south Florida's largest high school art exhibit & competition and spectacular on-street chalk painting complete the ArtFest Fort Myers experience.

At ArtFest Fort Myers, you'll discover **high-quality, Made-by-the-Artist original art** by more than **200 artists**. Whether you're a new or experienced art lover, you'll find something wonderful to add to your personal collection.

**Avid collector** on the hunt for unusual treasures? We've got you covered. This is a *highly selective* juried show. Watching your budget? You'll find beautiful art in a **wide range of prices** — truly something for everyone.

Enjoy the weekend where art comes to life!



## Southwest Florida Reading Festival

*The largest one-day reading festival in Florida!*

Fort Myers Regional Library,  
1651 Lee Street  
March 3, 2018, 10 am – 4 pm

Find adventure and entertainment at the Southwest Florida Reading Festival. Enjoy multiple stages, best-selling and award winning authors who share 'inside scoop'

Fort Myers River District...  
**Be in the know!**

There's always something going on in My River District! Check out our website for the latest events and happenings for all ages.

[MyRiverDistrict.com](http://MyRiverDistrict.com)

THE BEACHES OF FORT MYERS AND SANIBEL



## The Art of Selecting Artists

Juried art festivals bring the best-of-the-best artists for festival attendees to enjoy.

That means we're super-picky about which artists exhibit and sell at ArtFest Fort Myers. In fact, **only 1 in 4 artists who apply are accepted to ArtFest Fort Myers**. And the artists come from all over the country — usually about 39 states and several foreign countries are represented.

So you can be sure you'll discover **Made-by the-Artist** originals and beautiful, hand-crafted treasures in every booth.

Both the serious art lover and novice collector will find ArtFest Fort Myers the perfect place to learn about the world of art. Add to or begin your own unique collection. You'll meet the real artists face-to-face.



Horace & Shawn Thomas  
Wearable



### What does *juried art festival* mean?

The artists are invited after a *jury process*. A 5-member panel of art professionals views the artists' work on state-of-art equipment and score the artwork based upon quality of workmanship, originality and artistic conception. The top artists are then invited to exhibit at ArtFest Fort Myers. 940 applied – 215 got in!

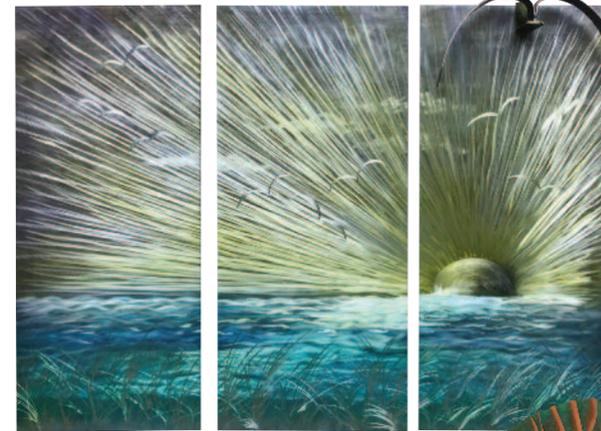


Debo Groover  
Mixed Media 2D



Phillip Hall  
Jewelry

Browse the Online Art Gallery @  
**ArtFestFortMyers.com**  
to see the exceptional quality.



Steve Anderson  
Metal

Kurt Ruby  
Mixed Media 2D



Carmen Lagos  
Watercolor



Thomas I. Spake  
Glass



Dewey James  
Digital



Renee Davis  
Jewelry



Kimber Fiebiger  
Sculpture

John Costin  
Printmaking



**ArtFestFortMyers.com**

February 3 & 4, 2018 Opening Night February 2 | Edwards Dr. Downtown Fort Myers River District

See Art. Love Art. Buy Art. | Art for Everyone | Kids Activities | Food & Entertainment

FREE Admission & Easy Parking



## Publix Art Yard Building Better Kids For Tomorrow... Through Art Today

Art is for everyone! Visit the **Publix Art Yard** and join all the fun art activities. There is something for the hidden artist in all of us.

**Kids@Art** is a community art project lead by local artists. **The Fort Myers Mural Society** is coordinating the creation of Rolly Pollies depicting people and animals. Children and parents will paint these 4-foot tall sculptures at the art festival.

**The Cookie Truck** is returning with fresh baked cookies for all to enjoy.

**Publix** staff creates art projects to thrill youth of all ages:

- create your personalized reusable lunch bag
- create and munch on your custom blend of trail mix
- create a Monster Mural with others

**Florida Repertory Theatre** features face painting and encourages youngsters to a dress-up in stage costumes for their photo op! You can even see video clips of the theater's professional productions.

**Char-Lee Weaver**'s showcase the use of fabric to create unique artwork – fun for all.

**Black History Museum** has art projects reflecting diverse cultures.

**Parent & Child Magazine** and **Moms Like Me** host youth and parents to make art projects together.

**Lee County Kids Tag Art** promotes creativity and an understanding of art in commerce. Fifth-graders create designs for a unique front-end license plates. Tags are for sale and proceeds support art in education.



Take part in creating Rolly Pollies



Sponsored by **Publix** where shopping is a pleasure!



**Youth Stage** Enjoy the sights and sounds of some of our community's talented students. All-new in 2018 lunchtime performances by Heat Latin Jazz will bring attendees to their feet with the rhythm. Youth Performances by Family Music Time; Florida Rep Theatre; Na'Pau Polynesian Dancers; Harmony Choir; Dance Bochette; Kellyn Celtic Dance; Quality of Life Center; Cotillion Gulf Coast Dance and more.



**Young Art Collectors Gallery** For just \$5, children ages 6 to 12 can buy wonderful items donated by festival artists. Artists welcome young collectors (and their parents) for art-signing and a chat with the artist.

## Art Under 20 High School Exhibit & Competition



Sponsored by **Suncoast Credit Union**

**Art Under 20** is a visual art exhibit and competition for Lee County high school students, who exhibit their work at ArtFest Fort Myers as they compete for \$8,000 in cash awards.

ArtFest Fort Myers created this venue to encourage students in their pursuit of art — and to encourage community support of art programs in our schools.

Each year hundreds of students exhibit their artwork in a gallery style

tent to thousands of family members, teachers, friends and admiring patrons. Awards are given to the best student artists in six categories: Digital, Drawing, Painting, Photography, 3-D and Mixed Media.

## Chalk Block

Sponsored by **Golisano Children's Hospital**

Forty teams from Lee County High Schools and five professional artists create beautiful chalk street painting directly on the pavement. For most students this is their first time painting on the street with chalk. You'll be amazed at their talent!

The 2018 theme is "Glow of Good Health"



**Nels Johnson**  
 Photography

**Robert Kastrinos**  
 Ceramics



**Matthew Hatala**  
 Wood

Browse the Online Art Gallery @  
**ArtFestFortMyers.com**  
 to see the exceptional quality.



## Opening Night

# enjoy an ARTFUL FRIDAY EVENING Under the Stars

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd • 6-9pm  
EDWARDS DRIVE AT HENDRY STREET IN HISTORIC DOWNTOWN  
(General Admission is FREE)

ArtFest Fort Myers' Opening Night is a feast for all your senses. It is the very first opportunity to mingle and shop with more than 70 of the festival's finest artists... all in a relaxed and intimate setting. Specialty lighting creates a bold backdrop as entertainment surrounds you and delectable food and fine drinks tempt your palette.



The historic Fort Myers River District is the place to be on a Friday night. Complimenting ArtFest's Opening Night, the monthly Art Walk features ever-delightful art galleries, restaurants and bars feature fun food and entertainment for every taste.

It all adds up to a glorious evening in the Fort Myers River District.

Support the arts in this gathering of art connoisseurs just like you as you enjoy all the benefits of being a VIP.

## upgrade vip

**VIP Tent on Opening Night, Friday, February 2nd**  
Overlooking the downtown waterfront and glorious sunset

- Gourmet hors d'oeuvres from 8 fine restaurants
- Wine, Beer and more
- Music by Hot Buttered Nuts
- 70 fabulous artists

**VIP Tent Saturday & Sunday, February 3rd and 4th**  
Garden setting overlooking the downtown waterfront

- Mimosas, coffee and sconces to start your day
- Catered speciality lunch
- Afternoon Snack Bar
- Wine, beer and more all day
- Jazzy entertainment
- 215 fabulous artists

Easy reserved VIP parking all weekend!

*Don't miss the art event of the season!*



**\$125 per person**  
**To reserve your VIP tickets:**  
**ArtFestFortMyers.com**  
**Click on "VIP"**

Sponsored by:  
**BUCHER**  
WEALTH MANAGEMENT GROUP  
of  
**RAYMOND JAMES**



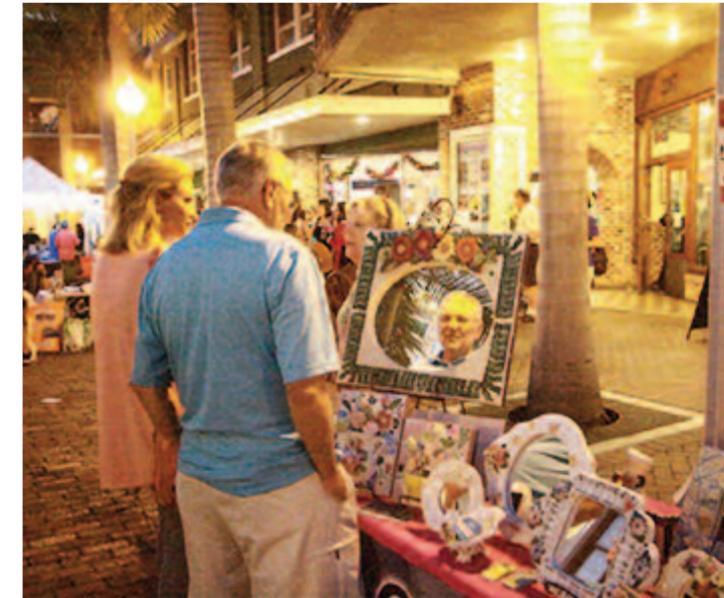
DOWNTOWN FORT MYERS

A mainstay in the River District social scene, **First Friday Art Walk** takes over the streets of downtown and celebrates budding to professional artists.

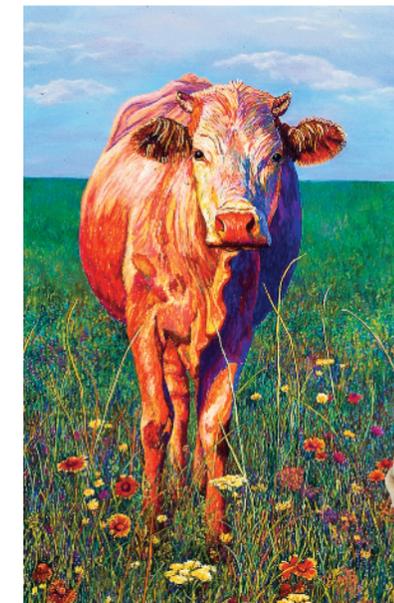
Held on the first Friday of each month from 6 - 10 pm all year long, more than one dozen galleries invite locals and visitors to a self-guided walking tour throughout the core downtown and beyond. Art enthusiasts can "Meet the Artists" at most of the galleries. Enjoy live demonstrations, and peruse individual art vendors along First Street as you stroll through the evening.

For more information please visit:  
[www.fortmyersartwalk.com](http://www.fortmyersartwalk.com) or  
[www.fortmyersriverdistrictalliance.com](http://www.fortmyersriverdistrictalliance.com)

**ArtFest 2018**  
FORT MYERS  
Southwest Florida's Premier Art Festival



Linda Apriletti  
Painting- Oil/Acrylic



Ellen Marshall  
Drawing



Yan Fang Inlow  
Fiber- Non wearable

Browse the Online Art Gallery @  
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to see the exceptional quality.

Susan Griggs-Allen  
Mixed Media 3D



**ArtFestFortMyers.com**

February 3 & 4, 2018 Opening Night February 2 | Edwards Dr. Downtown Fort Myers River District

See Art. Love Art. Buy Art. | Art for Everyone | Kids Activities | Food & Entertainment

FREE Admission & Easy Parking



## Festival Poster & T-shirts

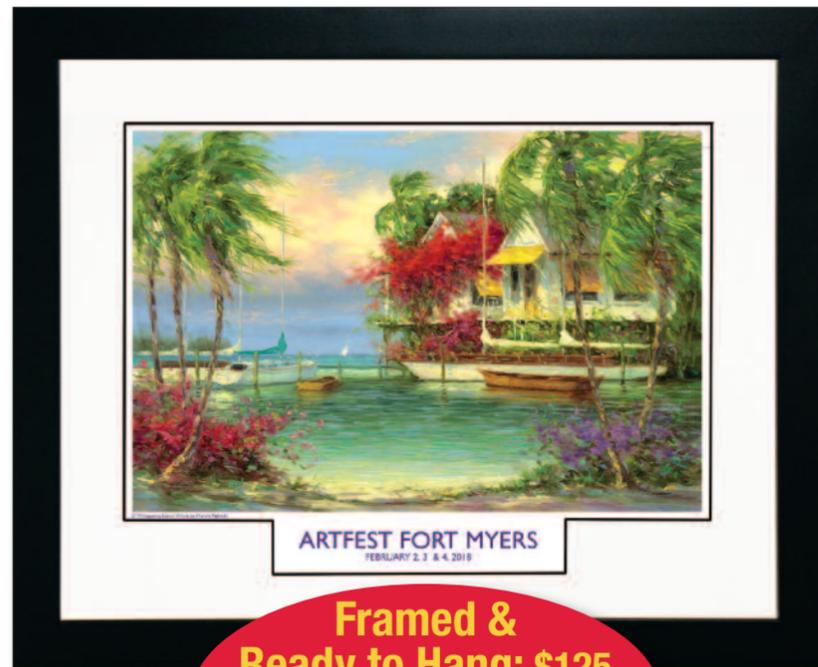
Martin Figlinski is the 2018 Commemorative Poster & T-shirt Artist

"Whispering Island Winds"

The subjects that Martin depicts are often not exact places or scenes rather they are his interpretations of things he has seen and imagined. Martin's impressionistic oil paintings are rich with detail and lively brushstrokes and make us wish we were somewhere inside one of his paintings.

Whispering Island Winds captures all that is special about Southwest Florida and fills your spirit with nature's beauty and peace.

Martin was last at ArtFest Fort Myers in 2015 and we are excited to welcome him back to the art festival – as the Poster Artist.



**Framed & Ready to Hang: \$125**

Available unframed to fit standard 16" x 20" frame: \$30

Order Year-round  
[ArtFestFortMyers.com/store](http://ArtFestFortMyers.com/store)

Enjoy Martin's original artwork at ArtFest Fort Myers or online at [Figlinski.com](http://Figlinski.com).

Poster fits a standard 16" x 20" frame.



**ArtFest Tees**  
Various styles & designs from \$20



## Caloosahatchee Celtic Festival

Fort Myers Recreation Division and Celtic Heritage Productions invite you to "Don your Tartan" and bring your family and friends out to enjoy the 15th Annual Caloosahatchee Celtic Festival.

Friday Night, January 26th is the Kick-Off Party in Centennial Park, Downtown Fort Myers, starting at 5:00 pm. Traditional Celtic food, drink and merchandise along with performances by our favorite bands! From Philadelphia the high energy Irish/Folk duo; **House of Hamill**, from Jacksonville Beach the boys in the "Big White Van"; **Rathkeltair** and rounding out the evening from Glasgow, Scotland; **Albannach** with their own unique blend of drums, pipes and a digeridoo!

The Festival continues on Saturday, January 27th at Centennial Park beginning at noon.

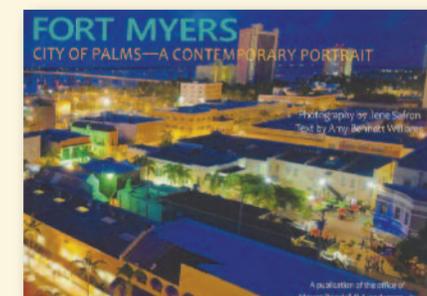
Joining **Albannach** and **Rathkeltair**, are one of the most sought after Celtic bands ~ **The Screaming Orphans**, an all-sister band from Donegal, Ireland. SWFL own premier Irish party band; **West of Galway. Marcille Wallis & Friends** bring us a unique blend of music and dance from Scotland and Ireland and don't miss the performance by the **Kellyn Celtic Arts Irish Dancers!**



Friday night admission \$5.  
Saturday admission \$12.  
2-Day Festival Pass \$15

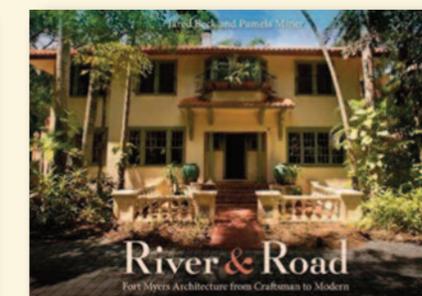
For more information please call 239.321.7529 or 941.625. 8544.

## Enjoy More About Fort Myers



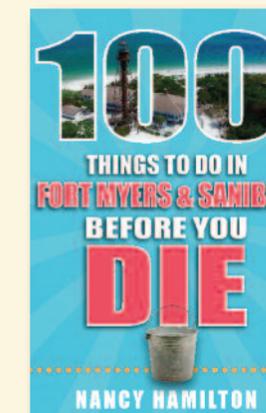
**Fort Myers - A Contemporary Portrait**  
A snapshot of the city we commonly refer to as paradise. Whether you are here to find love, start a family, build a business or simply visit our City of Palms you will never regret discovering and experiencing Fort Myers.

Author Amy Bennett Williams  
Photography by Ilene Safron



**River & Road**  
With its striking photographs and engaging stories, **River & Road** is a visual and narrative history of the architectural evolution and urban development of South Florida as shown within the treasured neighborhoods of McGregor Boulevard in Fort Myers.

Authors Jared Beck and Pamela Miner



**100 Things to Do in Fort Myers & Sanibel Before You Die**  
The vibrant and artsy city of Fort Myers paired with the pristine white sand beaches strewn with seashells bordering the warm Gulf of Mexico waters of Sanibel and the neighboring islands allow you to disconnect from pressures and begin your explorations.

Author Nancy Hamilton

**Books available at ArtFest Fort Myers (Feb. 3-4)!  
Meet the authors and get your book signed.**



**5 kilometers. Run or Walk. Race or Fun.**

At the one and only ArtFest Fort Myers. So much more than any ordinary 5K, **Publix Run To The Arts** brings together the best that life has to offer: health and fitness, arts and culture, friends and family, and the scenic beauty of the Fort Myers waterfront.

Sunday, February 4, 2018 • 8:15AM  
Register at: [RunToTheArts.com](http://RunToTheArts.com)

## Festival Sponsors



[ArtFestFortMyers.com](http://ArtFestFortMyers.com)

February 3 & 4, 2018 Opening Night February 2 | Edwards Dr. Downtown Fort Myers River District

There's Always Something Going On

# THE RIVER DISTRICT

## There's Always Something Going On



### Sense of History

From the early days of scrub cattle and citrus farms, Fort Myers has had character. Along with a tropical climate and what would soon be recognition as a world-class destination for sport fishing, Fort Myers was on its way to big things.

While the town grew on its own, it was the arrival of famed winter resident Thomas Edison in 1885 that propelled Fort Myers to a national platform.

By the turn of the century, and quickly heading towards the great "Florida Land Boom," Fort Myers was developed as the most metropolitan city in the region. State of the art buildings were constructed in the downtown business district, neighborhoods were developed, and cultural attractions built. Meanwhile, businesses were established, ranching and agriculture expanded, and Fort Myers' place as the county seat and anchor of life in the region was solidified.

Although there would be ups and downs over the years, Fort Myers and its spirited downtown business district

would continue to grow, diversify, and excite. In recent years, downtown has undergone tremendous change. Historic buildings in the core district have been restored to near original condition, high-rise residential towers dot the riverfront, and a never-ending schedule of events and activities have energized the historic city.

Today we welcome you to the historic downtown Fort Myers River District, a place where Old Florida charm meets trendy today. You'll enjoy passing through the streets once travelled by Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, and so many more. You'll experience dozens of unique restaurants and one-of-a kind retail shops. Attractions from live theatre, river cruises, historic home sites or a walking tour supply endless leisure, while community events and programs fill the calendar with activity.

***The River District has something for everyone!***



### A Full Day

Whether waking up and starting your day at the downtown **Hotel Indigo**, **Legacy Harbour Hotel & Suites**, or as a resident of the River District, downtown wakes with the smell of fresh coffee and an array of healthy breakfasts coming from the **Rebel Coffee Roastery** or one of the other number of coffee houses and breakfast delights.

Charged and ready, take a walk or run through Centennial Park and over the bridges to enjoy the remarkable view of the historic Fort Myers Yacht Basin. Or, for a more structured experience, take a class at **Soni Yoga**.

Venture to the west end, landing at **Pure Florida** to embark on a water excursion to see the sights of the Caloosahatchee, or head next door to the historic and nationally award winning **Edison Ford Winter Estates** to tour the homes and gardens that helped make Fort Myers famous.



Afterwards, stop into **Pinchers** at the **Marina at Edison Ford** for a seafood lunch or make your way back to the core with flavors to suit any taste. From the fantastically themed **Ford's Garage**, **Capones Coal Fired Pizza**, and **Los Cabos Cantina**, or a quicker grab and go at **3 Pepper Burrito Co.** or the one and only **Downtown House of Pizza**, there are so many options. More the sandwich type? Then stop by to **Wise Guys Deli** or downtown **Subway**.

### Shopping

Downtown streets are lined with local retailers that have loads of things that you just have to have. **Market Earth** has the flair for natural items, **The Nest** carries specialty home décor, and **Timeless**, carries so much more than time pieces! **The Franklin Shops** boasts more than 90 unique, locally-owned shops like **Bling that Sings** all within one



venue. Or pop back out for the street experience and enjoy **Another Time** with its whimsical tropical art and Old Florida finds, the **Naples Soap Company**, **Shophe Around the Corner**, **Paris Market Antique Mall**, or **Enjewel**, among others.

### Attractions

Had enough shopping? Take advantage of the

range of activities the River District offers. A National Register Historic District, **True Tours** will guide you through the tales that built the town and more. **The Burroughs Home & Gardens** gives an inside look at the wealthy turn of the century life in the small town and the **Butterfly Estates** explores the native side of the Florida's butterflies. Improve a skill with a class at the **Flamingo Art Center**, another water experience with **Funtastic Boat Tours**, or a science and history explosion at the **IMAG History & Science Center**.

### Restaurants & Bars

All that activity and it's time for a break! A sweet afternoon delight at **Scoops on First** or **Sidecar Treats** is always a good option, or if a beverage sounds right, stop into the **World Famous Cigar Bar**, the **City Tavern**, **Cowboy Up Saloon**, the **American Legion**, **Hideaway Sports Bar**, **Millennial Brewing Company**, **Space 39**,

or the **United Ale House**. If your more in the mood for dinner, downtown is a great destination with **Twisted Vine**, **The Standard**, **Blu Sushi**, **Firestone's Grill**, **King's Kitchen**, and the charming **Veranda**, among many.

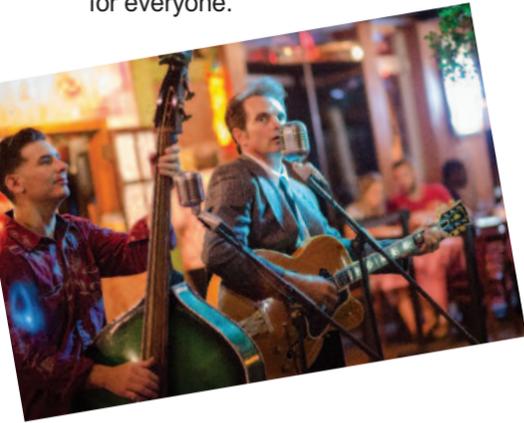
### Arts

Planning to spend the evening in the River District? Then there's art and more abound. Galleries like **Act Gallery**, **Marc Harris Wildlife**, **Two Newts Gallery & Gifts**, and the **Rene' Miville Gallery** are just a few of the venues to enjoy. For a livelier event, head over to the award-winning **Florida Repertory Theatre**, the **Laboratory Theater**, or catch a show or concert at the **Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center**.



## Events

If an outdoor event is more to your liking, then you are in luck! There are weekly free events and activities for everyone.



Led by the **River District Alliance**, more than 50 free and family friendly events are hosted throughout the year from the monthly **Art Walk** and **Music Walks**, to the seasonal **Pet Walk**, **Downtown Car Cruise-In**, **Bike Night**, or special annual events including the **Downtown Countdown New Year's Eve**, **St. Patty's Day Block Party**, **July 4th Freedom Fest**, or the **Veterans Day Parade**. With dozens of other annual events including the kickoff to festival season with **ArtFest Fort Myers** and the three-week long **Edison Festival**, there are truly events for all interests and ages in the River District.

Regardless of an outdoor event, the nightlife is always happening if you're in the mood to dance the hours away at any one of the clubs in the district from **Celsius** on the historic **Patio de Leon** to a moonlight view from the **Sky Bar at the Firestone** or the rooftop bar at **Hotel indigo**.

## Living

If you've fallen in love with the River District after all this, you're not alone! Explore the opportunities to come and live downtown with

a number of resources including **Allure** and **ONE Condominiums**, **Campo Felice**, **City of Palms Realty**, **Corbin Henderson Company**, **Florentine Holding Company**, **Remax Dream**, **Barclay's**, **Sellstates Laurie Smith**, **Ryan Hostetter**, and **Brenda Tonsager**, or the historic **Patio de Leon**, **2213 Main Street**, **2214 First Street** or **The Dean**.

Downtown has everything you need to live and play from personal, convenience, home, and business services including **Profiles Salon**, the **Blue Dahlia Session Salon**, **uBreakiFix**, **Dr. Senior Optometry**, **Sally Frizzell Coleman CPA**, the handy **Downtown Grab & Go**, **Edison National Bank**, **Iberia Bank**,

**Sanibel Captiva Community Bank**, **EnSite**, **Gulfcoast Leisure**, **Global Security** and **Global Home Watch & Concierge Service**, **Gecko Hospitality**, **Strayhorn & Persons Attorneys & Counselors at Law**, **ShaBro Alternative Office Solutions Corp**, **Main Sail Video Production**, **Lee County Legal Aid Society**, and the **Friends of the Fort Myers Library**. Oh, and worried about parking? **Crown Valet** and **Frey Valet** will take care of you at many of the large events or on weekends, the **Nickel Ride** offers an easy get around any time of the day, or contact **Denison Parking** for more assistance!

We hope you'll find the historic downtown Fort Myers River District as special as we do!



## Imaginarium History & Science Center

IMAG offers fun for all ages to discover the wonders of science and history. On the Eastern edge of the historic downtown Fort Myers River District, IMAG is housed in a repurposed water treatment plant providing a large, open environment to explore over 60 hands-on exhibits. Feed a stingray, touch an alligator, and visit the Living Lab to see turtles, snakes, frogs, a bearded dragon, prairie dogs and much more! Gaze at the tropical fish in the 3,200-gallon aquarium built by Animal Planet's Tanked, which displays a replica of the USS Mohawk artificial reef. Explore History exhibits spanning from the Ice Age to the early 1900s and visit the original fort of Fort Myers in a one-of-a-kind 3D Virtual Reality experience. Go upstairs to touch a cloud, become a TV weather forecaster and learn about



nanotechnology. Outside, explore the river in the Caloosahatchee Experience, stroll through the Backyard Nature exhibit, and feed fish in the Fisheye Lagoon. Younger

visitors will enjoy the Mini Museum early childhood area.

For more information visit [www.i-sci.org](http://www.i-sci.org)

## Seas The Day!

SEAS THE DAY in southwest Florida with Pure Florida.

**SEAS THE DAY!** with Pure Florida. Experience southwest Florida's beauty on the water with sightseeing history and eco tours, fishing charters, boat rentals, and jet ski rentals and adventure with Jet Boat Thrill Rides. Pure Florida also invites our dog-loving guests to enjoy our monthly Bark on the Ark cruises where you and your best

pal can have fun on the water together! Customized group tours to Matlacha Island or to Fort Myers Beach to visit the historic Mound House are a must! Pure Florida has two great locations; historic Tin City in Naples and The Marina at Edison Ford in Fort Myers. In Fort Myers, guests cruise past Downtown Fort Myers, river islands, bird rookeries, mangroves and the Edison & Ford Winter Estates while enjoying interesting narration on the history and



ecology of our area. In Naples, Jet Boat thrill rides, dolphin sightseeing and sunset cruises on the Double Sunshine, the best Deep Sea and Calm Bay fishing or

create your own day with boat and jet ski rentals. We look forward to your visit! SEAS THE DAY with Pure Florida!

[www.PureFL.com](http://www.PureFL.com)  
The Marina at Edison Ford  
2360 West First Street  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
(239) 919-2965

Tin City  
1200 5th Ave S.  
Naples, FL 34102  
(239) 263-4949



## Alliance for the Arts

The Alliance for the Arts is a vibrant, exciting and welcoming nonprofit arts center located in the heart of beautiful southwest Florida. Since 1975, we have cultivated a creative community through year-round exhibits, events, festivals, concerts, classes, theatre, children's camp, a weekly market and more. We are a creative hub for self-expression, imagination, and individuality where people of all backgrounds and abilities come to discover hidden talents, reignite passions and connect with each other through the arts.

The Alliance campus is open to the public on Monday - Friday from 9am-5pm and Saturday from 9am-1pm. For a full listing of events or to purchase tickets, visit [ArtInLee.org](http://ArtInLee.org), call 239-939-2787 or find us on Facebook ([www.Facebook.com/ArtInLee.org](http://www.Facebook.com/ArtInLee.org)).

**GET INSPIRED**  
Connect with the arts

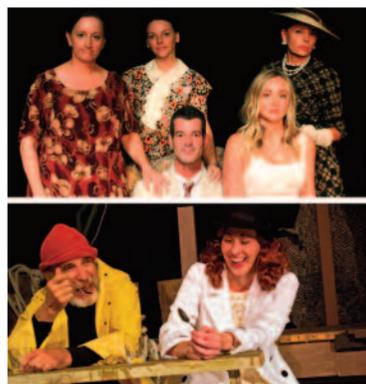
Gallery • Theatre • Classes  
Concerts • Comedy Nights  
Weekly GreenMarket  
Arts Camps • Outdoor Movies

**ALLIANCE FOR THE ARTS**

[ArtInLee.org](http://ArtInLee.org) • 239-939-2787 • Fort Myers, FL

## Theatre

The Alliance for the Arts theatre is proud to provide audiences with quality, culturally fulfilling and diverse theatrical experiences. Our live productions feature a variety of comedic favorites, classics, socially relevant plays and youth theatre. Enrich your afternoon or evening with a show or concert at Alliance. Check out tickets and times at [ArtInLee.org](http://ArtInLee.org).



## SOCO & GREENMARKET

Spend your Saturday with us! Our weekly Saturday GreenMarket, features locally grown produce and products as well as gardening workshops, free yoga sessions, and live music. Also experience SoCo Cultural District the second Saturday of each month from 5 pm – 10 pm. This event

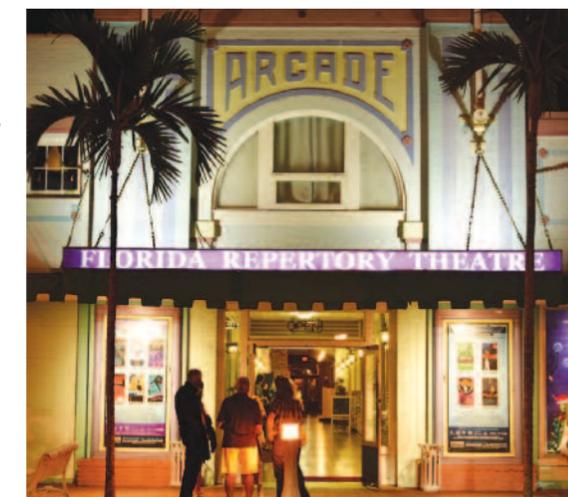
features nearby cultural stops from art galleries and artists studios, restaurants, music and dinner theatres. For a full program, visit [ArtInLee.org/SoCo](http://ArtInLee.org/SoCo).

## Florida Rep

Celebrating 20 years of Award-Winning Regional Theatre, Florida Repertory Theatre is a fully professional theatre company that *The Wall Street Journal* called "One of America's Top Repertory Companies!" Performing in the Historic Arcade Theatre, a beautifully restored 393-seat venue, and the intimate ArtStage Studio Theatre, a state-of-



the-art 120-seat black box, Florida Rep produces a wide variety of comedies, dramas, musicals, and new plays, and brings more than 82,000 people to the Fort Myers River District annually throughout its September to May season. Florida Rep is the only theatre company of its caliber in Southwest Florida and boasts a multifaceted Education department reaching over 31,000 students annually. Florida Rep continues to make national headlines and in 2017, for the ninth consecutive season *The Wall Street Journal's* acclaimed drama critic and best-selling author, Terry Teachout, gave Florida Rep a sterling review, adding to his 2009 praise, when he told two million readers nationwide to



"make haste to Fort Myers, where the weather is warm and the theater fine!"

Tickets and Subscriptions are Now On Sale! Call or Click today to Find Out Why *The Wall Street Journal* is Raving! 239-332-4488 or online at [FloridaRep.org](http://FloridaRep.org)

## The Laboratory Theater of Florida



*Musical Comedy Murders of 1940*, and *Visiting Mr. Green*. Lab Theater has been described as innovative, courageous, and edgy. It also engages inextensive community outreach with area partner organizations.

or taking cultural courses at the innovative theater.

For more information, visit [LaboratoryTheaterFlorida.com](http://LaboratoryTheaterFlorida.com)

Tickets and information at 239.218.0481.

Camps for kids are also offered. Award-winning artistic director Annette Trossbach invites performers and learners of all ages to expand their creative and cultural horizons by attending, volunteering at,

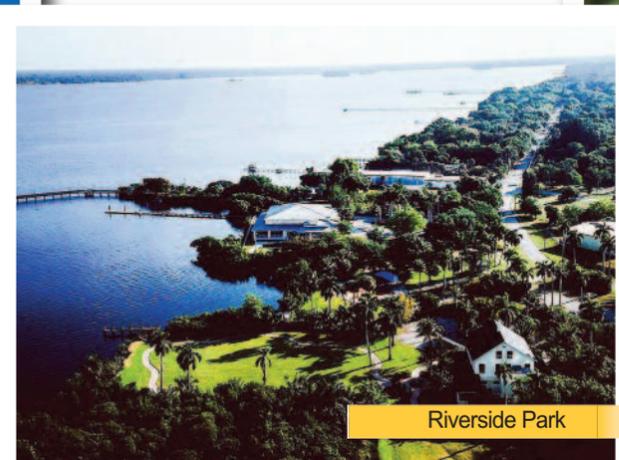




Beach Volleyball



Centennial Park Riverfront



Riverside Park



Butterfly Estates



Clemente Park - Black History Museum

# CITY OF FORT MYERS Activities for All Interests and All Ages

## Parks

In a city with Florida's largest number of sunny days and a focus on healthy living, parks and recreation are a year-round priority for visitors and residents alike. Come enjoy our outdoor spaces!

A centerpiece of the City's outdoor life, **Centennial Park** encompasses 10 acres of energetic waterfront green space overlooking the scenic Caloosahatchee River. Walking or running paths, beach volleyball, public art, playground, scenic photo ops and picnic pavilions are just a few of the amenities.

Centennial Park is also the home of many community events and festivals.



Farmer's Market

Fresh from farm to table, every Thursday at the west end of Centennial Park, discover a lively, green **Farmers Market** offering a colorful, delicious selection of locally grown produce, seafood, yummy baked goods, honey, nuts, cheese, flowers and more.

**Billy's Creek** meanders around a natural marsh system with 1.5 miles of paved trails for a leisurely walk or fast-paced jog. Launch your kayak from this historic and scenic spot – a quiet retreat located only minutes from downtown.

As the gateway to a six-mile linear park trail, **Trailhead Park** is a destination in itself. A playground, pavilions and nature-filled walking paths set the stage for a beautiful day outdoors.

**Jefferson Park** is located in the heart of a residential community near the Fort Myers Country Club. Welcoming neighbors and visitors the bright, colorful playground in a

natural setting provides children with a safe, fun place to play.

Also near the Fort Myers Country Club the **Fort Myers Aquatic Center** is a flagship facility with a 10-lane, junior Olympic sized competition pool and a zero-entry kiddie pool with a play feature for children. Come here for swim lessons, invitational meets, and birthday parties. Did we mention the 30-foot slide tower for an extra splash of fun?

**Roberto Clemente Park** league legend, "El Magnifico," who spent seven spring training seasons in Fort Myers. Enjoy its picnic pavilions and public art. A highlight of this park is the **Black History Museum**, housed in the original Williams Academy, the first government-funded school for African-American students in Fort Myers. A do-not-miss stop – filled with memories of black history in Fort Myers. Nearby is McCollum Hall, the Dunbar neighborhood's most historic landmark built in 1938.

Like a secret garden, **Snell Park** is a quiet intimate retreat tucked away in a residential neighborhood. Donated in 1927 as a gift to the City, this beautiful riverfront park was dedicated in 2014 for the enjoyment of friends, family, neighbors and visitors.

Relax on a bench to take in the river view, bring a picnic, romp with your dog – this park is a place for all to enjoy!

Talk about a room with a view! On the banks of the Caloosahatchee River is **Riverside Community Center**. Dedicated in 2000, Riverside boasts a waterfront ballroom accommodating up to 190 guests and features a professional stage and catering kitchen. The surrounding Riverside Park, hosts a playground, large covered picnic areas, nature trails, canoe/kayak pier, fishing pier and a replica lighthouse. Riverside is a perfect location for your family reunion, wedding or other parties. And the sunset will top off your day!

Take a break in the shade at **Shady Oaks Park** where you can swing the bat on two softball fields, play on the playground, launch a kayak and enjoy a picnic.

## Attractions

Take a step back in time at the **Edison Ford Winter Estates**. "Uncommon friends" Thomas Edison and Henry Ford called Fort Myers home long before most of the world had ever heard of it.

Today, visitors of all ages from around the world can tour 20 acres of botanical gardens and nine historical buildings including Edison's research laboratory and a museum filled with an impressive collection of inventions, artifacts, and special exhibits.

Imagine what the world's most prolific and ingenious inventor would have thought about the amazing technology enabling us to capture this extraordinary bird's eye view today – we think he would have loved seeing something he could have only dreamed of in his day!

Flutter over to the **Butterfly Estates**, home of the Florida Native Butterfly Society, located in the Gardner's Park neighborhood. Open since 2009, the Estates houses a shop, cafe and a 3,600 square-foot glass butterfly conservatory dedicated to the protection and preservation of Florida's native butterfly species.

Yes, you can ice skate in Florida! **The Fort Myers Skatium** offers an ice skating arena, an athletic

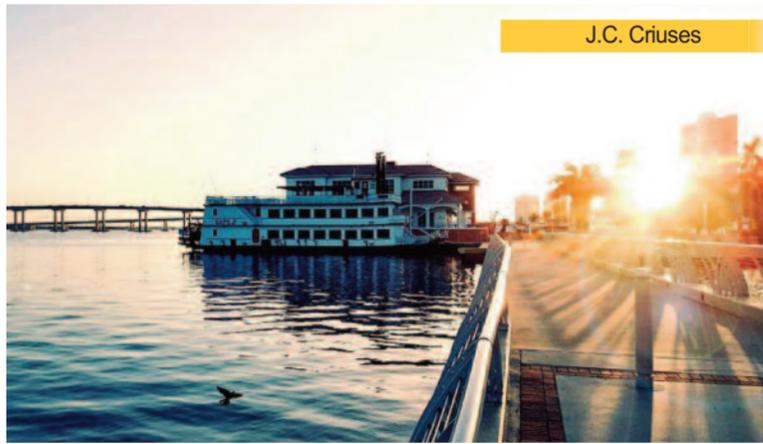
gymnasium and a fitness center all under one roof. The Skatium also offers skate rentals for both hockey and figure skating, plus a hockey pro shop. Learn To Skate is a certified Skating Academy and has ice-skating and hockey classes for youth and adults. Come chill out where the air is always cold!

Oh, my stars! **The Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium** offers 105 acres of fun and education. Plan at least a half-day to enjoy the museum, three nature trails, Planetarium, butterfly & bird aviaries, crawly reptiles & amphibians, a gift shop

*continued on next page*



Run To The Arts



J.C. Cruises

continued

and meeting & picnic areas. Learn about Southwest Florida's natural history and get an up close and personal view of resident creatures, including a skunk, a raccoon, fox, butterflies, and birds. Plus, the stars are always out in the Planetarium, the only one south of Bradenton and west of Miami!

Experience history and mystery aboard the **Seminole Gulf Railway** where you will enjoy a live murder mystery show while enjoying a five-course dinner during a 3.5-hour train ride from Fort Myers across the Caloosahatchee River.

All aboard the paddlewheel boat **Capt. JP with J.C. Cruises** for an enjoyable voyage along the Caloosahatchee River, giving you a unique view of the City of Fort Myers from the water. Enjoy a meal, cocktails or soft drinks, and music. There are two inside climate-controlled decks with large windows and an open-air top deck – perfect for viewing the sights, the sunsets, moon and stars.

Visit giant **Fleamasters**, Southwest Florida's biggest and best flea market! With over 900 stores, there is so much for everyone to enjoy, you won't know where to begin. Treat yourself to Fleamaster's festive atmosphere, stroll through the hundreds of bargain-packed booths or pick up a week's supply of fresh produce. Along every aisle, you'll discover small owner-operated shops that specialize in unique items — an eclectic mix of new and old — arts and crafts, antiques and collectibles, kitchen

products, clothing & shoes, luggage, jewelry & watches and 20 snack bars serving yummy treats. Name it, it's here!

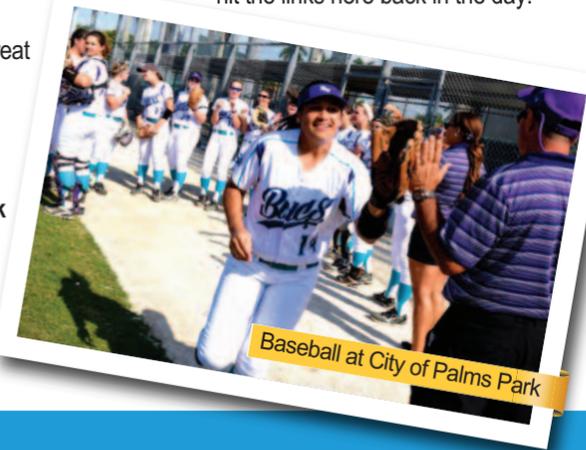
Need a souvenir for the folks back home? How about a Florida T-shirt or tank top or shell shops sell sea fans, shell night-lights, shell jewelry, wind chimes and even alligator heads.

**Manatee Park** is a non-captive warm water refuge for the Florida Manatee. Optimum viewing months are late December, January, and February when the Gulf of Mexico temperature is below 68F. The park has an extensive butterfly garden and is a demonstration landscape for the Florida Friendly Landscaping™ program. Birds and other wildlife can be found throughout the park.

More amenities include playgrounds, Live Oak amphitheater, Chickee Hut, pavilion, shelters, picnic area and restrooms. Fishing enthusiasts can enjoy the fishing pier on the Orange River. Bring your canoe/kayak and launch for fun exploration and access the natural beauty of the Great Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail.

## Baseball

Love baseball? **City of Palms Park** is a center for America's favorite pastime and the home stadium for the Florida Southwestern College (FSW) Buccaneers.



Baseball at City of Palms Park

City of Palms Park was originally the spring training site of the Boston Red Sox from 1993 until 2011. Now it is a hub for sports tourism and community events, including 73 days of amateur baseball tournaments annually. Events include Perfect Game, Roy Hobbs World Series, Minnesota Twins Sun Conference, USA Baseball and AAU Baseball, as well as Florida State Field Umpire Clinic and Team Puerto Rico practice.

Home to four baseball fields, **Sam Fleischman Park** also features two softball fields, a practice infield, a basketball court, and a playground. More than 700 boys and girls run the bases here every year as part of the Fort Myers American Little League.

For nearly 100 years, Terry Park has been a hub for baseball, hosting some of the game's greatest teams and players over the years. The park boasts four lighted fields with spectator seating including a covered grandstand on the main field. Today, over 160 college baseball teams from around the country use Terry Park to begin their college season.

## Golf

Golf is an esteemed part of vacation or leisure time. The City of Fort Myers has two enjoyable yet challenging golf courses for players of all skill levels.

Endearingly called "The Fort," the beloved **Fort Myers Golf and Country Club** opened for play in 1917. Designed in 1916 by the great Donald Ross, it is one of the oldest golf facilities on the west coast of Florida.

Thomas Edison and Henry Ford frequently hit the links here back in the day!



Fort Myers Golf & Country Club

100 years, 100 acres this par 71 to 70 for the men and 72 to 71 for the ladies course is a delight in old Fort Myers area.

"The Fort" is designed and constructed to provide accessibility for players with disabilities allowing all players to access routes to teeing grounds, putting greens, teeing stations, cart rental areas, bag drop

areas and golf course restrooms. There is also an accessible cart for players that require such accommodations.

### Eastwood Golf Club

Designed by Robert Von Hagge and Bruce Devlin traverses over 150 acres. Golf Digest ranked this par 72, 18-hole affordable course in its top 100 public golf facilities in the U.S.

Take a swing at the driving range or practice green and improve your game with lessons from PGA-certified professionals. Be among the first to play the newly renovated front nine. And after the game, relax at the 19th Hole Café offering delicious food and beverages.



Fleamasters



## History of Fort Myers

Ponce de Leon explored areas along Florida's Gulf coast in 1513 and 1521. The barrier islands adjacent to what would, in 360+ years, become Fort Myers are believed to be one of his many stops.

In the early 1700s the Lee Island coastline first appeared in British maps. Florida became a US Territory in 1821, and Fort Myers was built along the Caloosahatchee River during the Seminole Indian Wars.

The fort was abandoned in 1858 and reoccupied by Federal troops from 1863-1865. The Southernmost battle of the Civil War, a skirmish between Northern and Southern troops occurred in 1865.

In 1885, Thomas Alva Edison traveled by boat to Fort Myers. Edison, then 38 years old and widely known for his invention of the incandescent lamp and the phonograph, came for rest and sunshine and to shake off a lingering illness. Edison purchased a small house and 14 acres on the banks of the Caloosahatchee River. The following year, his bride, Minnie Miller Edison, joined him. Then famous guests such as Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone arrived transforming the quiet settlement into the beginnings of a thriving city.

In 1901 Thomas Edison planted 200 royal palm trees leading to his estate and in 1913 financed hundreds more to create McGregor Boulevard's 1,800-palms parade providing a beautiful grand entrance the City of Fort Myers.

## Experience Fort Myers sponsored by





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