

2012 TRAVEL GUIDE TO

FLORIDA

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Pearls of THE SUNSHINE STATE

BY SUSAN B. BARNES

For a state filled with 663 miles of beaches, theme parks featuring mice, boy wizards, killer whales, LEGOs and space travel, it may be surprising to learn there are also world-famous museums and myriad cultural gems in Florida. Here's a look at a few that ought not to be missed during a visit, wherever travel plans may take you.

BEAUTY IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

The world's largest collection of Louis Comfort Tiffany art is found at the Charles Hosmer Morse Museum in Winter Park, just outside of Orlando. Impressive works of art include the chapel interior Tiffany designed for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, not to mention the leaded-glass windows and lamps.

Also in Winter Park, the Rollins Cornell Fine Arts Museum features a combination of original and traveling exhibitions, from early Renaissance to contemporary, which means ever-changing exhibits. Be sure to check out the museum's permanent collection, including works by Matisse and Picasso.

Designed by San Francisco architect Stanley Saitowitz, the Tampa Museum of Art building is artwork unto itself. Step inside and find galleries filled with changing exhibits to suit everyone's tastes.

A year ago, the Dalí Museum made a huge splash in the arts world with the opening of its 20,000-square-foot museum dedicated to the world's most comprehensive collection of masterpieces by the artist himself, including 96 oil paintings; more than 100 watercolors and drawings; and 1,300



THE ORLANDO BALLET

graphics, photos, sculptures and *objets d'art*. The surrealism begins even before you walk through the door.

The Armed Forces Military Museum in Largo is 35,000 square feet of permanent, interactive exhibits, including replicas of wartime scenarios, from World War I to the Korean War.

Though its name is most commonly associated with circuses, the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, built in the late 1920s, is a stunning collection of American, Asian and European masterworks, including Rubens, van Dyck, Velázquez, Titian, El Greco and more. And, yes, a circus museum.

Railroad tycoon Henry Flagler was instrumental in developing south Florida, and his hotels helped establish tourism in the state. The Henry Morrison Flagler Museum in Palm Beach—Florida's first museum—is a testament to Flagler's history and the Gilded Age.

The Patty & Jay Baker Naples Museum of Art, open seasonally (October through June), is 30,000 square feet spread over three stories with 15 galleries and a glass-

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: VISIT ORLANDO; VISIT TAMPA BAY; VISIT ORLANDO



dome conservatory. The entrance gates are by metal artist Albert Paley and, once inside, look up to see chandeliers by glass artist Dale Chihuly. Inside the galleries you'll find world-class paintings, sculpture and drawings.

The largest museum in Florida, the Norton Museum of Art in Naples is internationally known for its permanent collection. Visitors are amazed by the 19th- and 20th-century Chinese, European and American works of art, not to mention contemporary art and photography.

ANNUAL EVENTS

MARCH

Gasparilla International Film Festival
Miami International Film Festival

APRIL

Florida Film Festival
Palm Beach International Film Festival
Sarasota Film Festival

OCTOBER

Tampa International Gay & Lesbian
Film Festival



ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

The Peabody Auditorium in Daytona Beach is home to not only a series of Broadway shows, but also the London Symphony Orchestra, the Daytona Beach Symphony Orchestra and the Daytona Beach Civic Ballet.

Broadway-caliber shows often make their way to the David A. Straz, Jr. Center for the Performing Arts in Tampa, not to mention comedians and musical acts, delighting audiences time and again.

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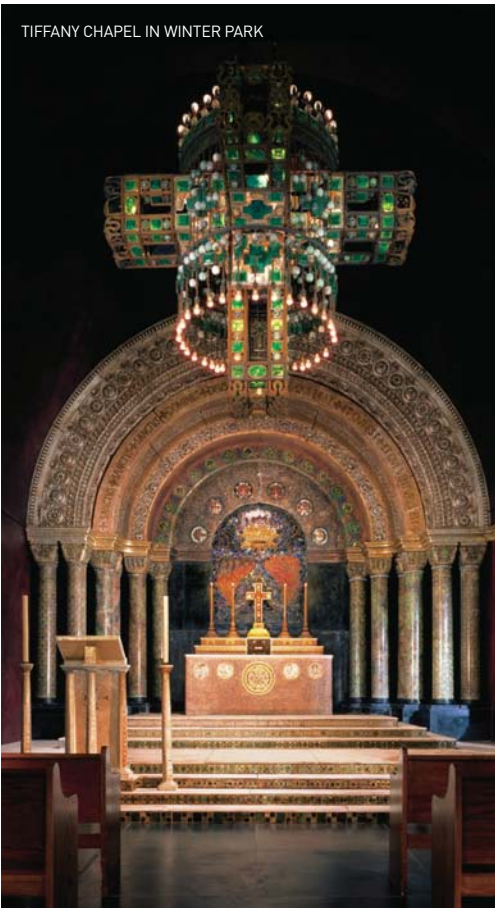
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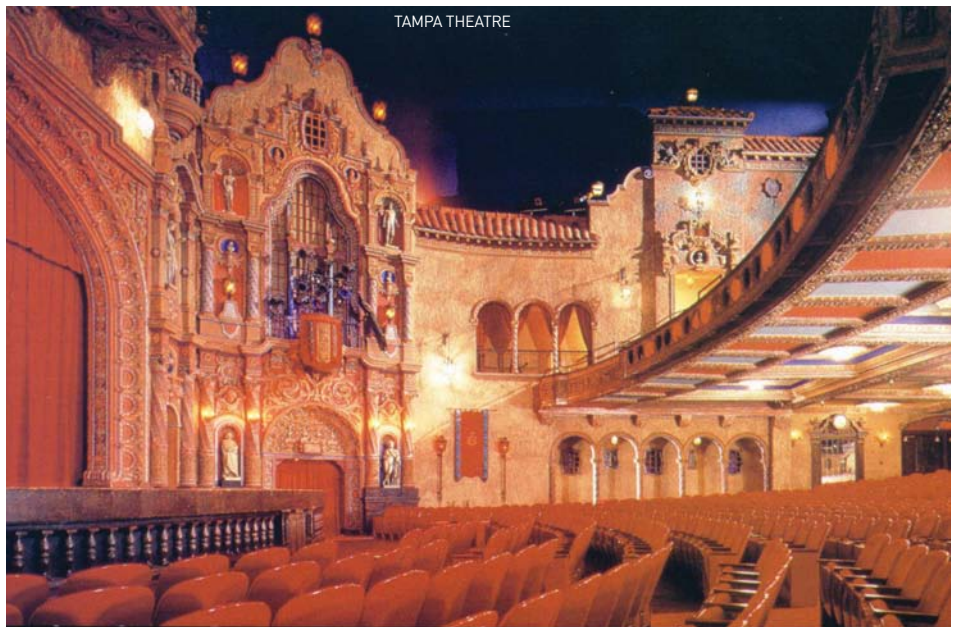
TIFFANY CHAPEL IN WINTER PARK

the helm, The Florida Orchestra is considered one of the best in America, and performs nearly 100 concerts annually throughout Tampa, Clearwater and St. Petersburg.

Designed by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater boasts near-perfect acoustics and has

received rave reviews from artists, technicians and audiences through the years.

Built in 1936, the Martin Theatre in Panama City has gone through a renaissance of its own—including being a shooting gallery—and today sets the stage for live productions.



TAMPA THEATRE

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SARASOTA CVB; VISIT ORLANDO; TAMPA THEATRE; VISIT ORLANDO

THE SILVER SCREEN

The Florida Theatre in Jacksonville is a terrific introduction to movie palaces built throughout the state in the late 1920s, many of which feature Mediterranean-influenced design with balconies, windows, columns, fountains and night skies with twinkling “stars” overhead.

Seeing a movie or concert at the Tampa Theatre is a magical experience. Definitely arrive early to the 1926 theater for a Mighty Wurlitzer Theater Organ performance before the main event.

Built in 1928 by J.E. Casale, the Polk Theatre in Lakeland stays true to the movie palace splendor. Independent feature films, cult classics and live musical performances fit the bill at this glorious old movie palace.

The Olympia Theater at the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts in Miami is another such gem. In addition to feature films, the 1926 theater hosts live performances, and community and social events.

For more than 25 years, the Enzian Theater in Orlando has been dedicated to connecting the community with independent feature films and providing a venue for intimate musical performances. Its com-



munity outreach is cemented with its hosting of several festivals, including producing the acclaimed Florida Film Festival.

WEIRD SCIENCE

With its space exploration, extreme weather and biodiversity, it's no wonder that several reputable science museums are found throughout the state.

Hands-on, interactive exhibits, laser and star shows, and even IMAX theaters will delight kids. Check out the Museum of Science & History in Jacksonville, Orlando Science Center, Museum of Science and Industry in Tampa, South Florida Science Museum in West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale Museum of Discovery and Science, or the Miami Science Museum.

FEATURED LINKS

David A. Straz, Jr. Center for the Performing Arts | strazcenter.org
Enzian Theater | enzian.org
Florida Orchestra | floridaorchestra.org
Henry Morrison Flagler Museum | flaglermuseum.us
Martin Theatre | martintheatre.com
Miami Science Museum | miamisci.org
Museum of Discovery & Science | mods.org
Museum of Science & History | themosh.org
Museum of Science and Industry | mosi.org
Norton Museum of Art | norton.org
Olympia Theater | gusmancenter.org
Orlando Science Center | osc.org
Patty & Jay Baker Naples Museum of Art | thephil.org/museum/museum.html
Peabody Auditorium | peabodyauditorium.org
Polk Theatre | polktheatre.org
Rollins Cornell Fine Arts Museum | rollins.edu/cfam
Ruth Eckerd Hall | ruth Eckerd Hall.com
South Florida Science Museum | sfsm.org
Tampa Museum of Art | tampamuseum.org
Tampa Theatre | tampatheatre.org
The Armed Forces Military Museum | armedforcesmuseum.com
The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum | morsemuseum.org
The Dalí Museum | thedali.org
The Florida Theatre | floridatheatre.com
The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art | ringling.org



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