

The best MARCO POLO Insider Tips

Our top 15 Insider Tips



INSIDER TIP ▶ Daytona Flea Market

Alongside motor sports, Daytona Beach has another passion: its *flea market*, the size of a small town, where every weekend hundreds of vendors sell their wares → p. 89

INSIDER TIP ▶ Jaw-dropping lobbies

The insides of Miami's Art Deco hotels are a spectacular sight too – from the opulent lobby of the Eden Roc to the water-blue reception at the Aqua → p. 35

INSIDER TIP ▶ Salsa in Little Havana

Son, guaracha, timba: they all come together in salsa, the wonderful rousing dance from Cuba. The best salsa bands in town perform in the *El Palenque Night Club* → p. 34

INSIDER TIP ▶ Key West – the calm version

Gently rustling palm fronds, daiquiris on the pool, stray chickens: feel the “Key Spirit” on the terrace of the *Avalon B&B* (photo above) → p. 57

INSIDER TIP ▶ The swamp at night

The most powerful impression from a night kayak tour through the *Everglades*: the eyes of the alligators shimmering red in the beam of the torches → p. 62

INSIDER TIP ▶ A piece of Old Florida

On *Anna Maria Island* no hotels or fast-food chains block the sea view, and in the evening no noisy nightlife will disturb your peace → p. 72

INSIDER TIP ▶ Keys in Peace

In *Cedar Key National Wildlife Refuge*, Florida's animals still live undisturbed. The only way to get to this island paradise is a small water taxi → p. 65

INSIDER TIP ▶ Music for the soul

Listen to the beautiful sounds of the carillon from the 209 ft high *Bok Tower* while enjoying a breath of fresh air and panoramic views over Central Florida → p. 110

INSIDER TIP ▶ Party away in Little

Havana

Caribbean Central: during the *Calle Ocho Festival*, Miami's street of the same name turns into an open-air stage for live music and carnival (photo below) → p. 124

INSIDER TIP ▶ Unforgettable sunsets

Fantastic food is the main course on the menu and phenomenal sunsets for dessert at the *South Beach Bar & Grille* in Boca Grande → p. 68

INSIDER TIP ▶ Dive with sea cows

At least in the water manatees appear graceful creatures. In many springs, e. g. in *Crystal River*, you can encounter them in their own element, close up → p. 66

INSIDER TIP ▶ Time travel

With its historic buildings, St Augustine offers the perfect stage for the *Pirate & Treasure Museum*, a reminder of a lawless past → p. 95

INSIDER TIP ▶ A must for sporty types...

...and wannabes, why not: the *World Wide Sportsman* is a gigantic department store catering to the needs of fishermen, surfers or beachcombers. From high-tech equipment to fashionable accessories, it's all here → p. 48

INSIDER TIP ▶ Schooner Wharf Bar

Seadogs showing each other their tattoos, a warm breeze wafting through, ice cubes clinking discreetly in cocktail glasses, with a Bob Marley soundtrack: this cosy bar would have delighted “Papa” Hemingway too → p. 57

INSIDER TIP ▶ At the heart of

St Augustine

Excellent location for lunch and perfect spot for people watching on warm summer evenings – the *A1A Ale Works* → p. 114



BEST OF...

GREAT PLACES FOR FREE

Discover new places and save money

FOR FREE

● *Miami creativity for free*

Twice a month there is no charge for families for the *Pérez Art Museum*. This fabulous museum exhibits both established and young artists and has outstanding collections → p. 37

● *Feed the big fish*

Every day, *Robbie's Marina* attracts dozens of curious visitors wanting to feed the wild tarpons. The show is free, only the bucket of sardines costs a couple of dollars → p. 48

● *The Everglades in black and white*

The Everglades as you have never seen them before: in the *Big Cypress Gallery* near Ochopee the landscape photographer Clyde Butcher exhibits fascinating black-and-white photos of this unique biotope → p. 60

● *City tour (nearly) for free...*

Well, 50 cent is as good as, no? In St Petersburg, an old-fashioned trolleybus, *The Looper*, covers most of the city's attractions and is even free if you stay in within the signposted Free Fare Zone → p. 68

● *Government HQ with a view*

Enjoy free panoramic views over Tallahassee from the 22nd floor of the *New Capitol Building* (photo) → p. 82

● *Dead with a sense of humour*

There can't be a more entertaining way to visit a cemetery than *Key West Cemetery* where illustrious personalities lie buried. Learn some of their life stories from the quirky inscriptions on gravestones, such as "Devoted Fan of Julio Iglesias" or "I told you I was sick" → p. 53

● *Ocala National Forest*

An adventure park with no charge: swim and snorkel in crystal-clear springs or paddle through palm forests, observing sea eagles, and, with a bit of luck, even black bears → p. 97

●●● Dots in guidebook refer to "Best of..." tips

ONLY IN FLORIDA

Unique experiences

● *Meet you on the pier?*

They reach far into the sea, and usually feature benches at their tip, sometimes even a snack kiosk. Piers such as the *Naples Pier* make wonderful meeting places – at sunset in particular → p. 69

● *Snorkelling amongst corals*

The underwater world of the Keys is a colourful paradise. Langoustines, anemones and tropical fish create a feast for the senses (photo) → p. 117

● *Daytona 500*

500 miles on the oval track of the *Daytona International Speedway*, that's 200 rounds in souped-up Nascar racers, sky-high viewing figures on American TV and eardrum-shattering noise. Everyone should attend the "Great American Race" at the end of February once in their lives → p. 88

● *The living room of the alligators*

Thousands of alligators and crocodiles live here in the ponds and swamps of *Gatorland* near Orlando. Watch them close up from safe viewpoints → p. 98

● *Beautiful people*

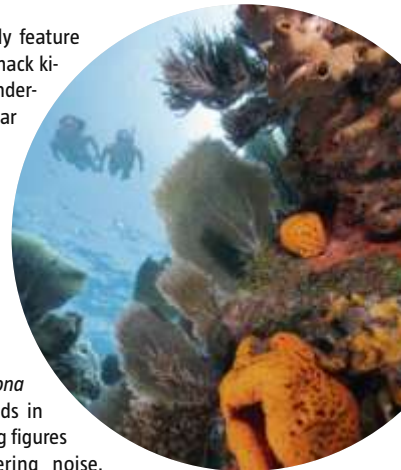
Ocean Drive is Miami's most famous street. Trendy hotels, restaurants, bars and clubs attract the fashion and lifestyle crowd like a magnet. There is no better place for people-watching than this catwalk → p. 34

● *Lime tarts in the evening?*

This may be an acquired taste, as not everyone likes to end the day with a slice of cake. But this is Key West, and Key lime pie is the uber-famous lime-and-cream tart! So make your way to *Kermit's*, purchase your pie with cutlery and enjoy it at sunset on Mallory Square → p. 57

● *In Hemingway's footsteps*

In the charmingly down-at-heel *Blue Heaven Restaurant*, where Hemingway used to watch boxing matches and cockfights, cats and chickens under tables are part of the furniture, as well as Bob Marley's "Legalize it", which is played at least three times a day → p. 55



ONLY IN

DISCOVERY TOURS



1

FLORIDA AT A GLANCE



START: ① Miami

END: ① Miami

Distance:

🚗 2,811 km/1,747 miles

2 weeks

Driving time
(without stops)
approx. 43 hours



COSTS: admission prices and hire: \$ 560 per person, petrol: \$ 300, accommodation: \$ 1,800 for double room, food: \$ 800 per person

WHAT TO PACK: swimwear, sun cream and mosquito repellent, headwear

IMPORTANT TIPS: The bridge to ⑧ Sanibel costs \$ 6 \$ for cars.

Florida is more than just sun, sea, sand and Mickey Mouse. This two-week tour shows you another side to the sunshine state, taking you to modern entertainment centres, wildlife refuges and undiscovered coastline.

Every corner of the earth has its own special charm. If you want to explore all the many different facets of this region, head off the beaten track or get tips for the best stops, breathtaking views, hand-picked restaurants or the best local activities, then these customised discovery tours are just the right thing. Choose the best route for the day and follow in the footsteps of the MARCO POLO authors – well-prepared to navigate your way to all the many highlights that await you along the tour.

Leave ① **Miami** → p. 32 on **Highway 1 southbound**. When you reach Homestead, take **Highway 9336** to **Flamingo** → p. 60 and through the ② **Everglades** → p. 58, Florida's expansive swamp and wetlands area. Your route then stretches out over the deep, blue sea along the ③ **Overseas Highway** → p. 46. Take in the ocean view from the **Seven Mile Bridge** and swim on the beach at the **Bahia Honda State Park**, before spending the night in ④ **Key West** → p. 52 at the **Parrot Key Resort** (148 rooms | 2801 N Roosevelt Blvd. | tel. 1305 8092200 | www.parrotkeyresort.com | *Expensive*).

