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ST. AUGUSTINE
PONTE VEDRA
FLORIDA'S HISTORIC COAST®

Here is What's New on Florida's Historic Coast this Summer!

There are plenty of new things happening along Florida's Historic Coast this summer.

Along with the 42 miles of pristine Atlantic Beaches, America's oldest city and outdoor recreation are still favorites in Florida. And now with new hotels, attractions and dining, visits here are even more memorable and refreshing.

And staying here has never been more comfortable. Healthy travel protocols remain a priority and wide-open spaces abound. There are many ways to safely experience the new additions on Florida's Historic Coast starting with some new hotel openings in 2021, and renovations at well-established lodgings.

At the [Ponte Vedra Inn & Club](#), the newly restored historic Ocean House and Peyton House offers 41 new oceanfront guest rooms and suites. The resort offers multiple dining venues for guests to enjoy. And in these times of social distancing, the popular Surf Deck Grille, which sits on the sand's edge, offers full-service lunch and dinner with a panoramic view of the Atlantic Ocean. The campus-style layout of the resort provides guests a real sense of confidence and comfort, as they don't have to go up and down elevators or crowded hallways to access guest rooms and resort amenities. And the resort blends classic European leisure, nostalgia, and friendly competition with the debut of the new sun-dappled [Croquet Lawn and Bocce Court](#) for guests.

The newly opened oceanside [Historic Watermelon House](#), a luxury 6-bedroom vacation home located on the Intracoastal Waterway on Crescent Beach, offers a luxury getaway in the pristine Matanzas Inlet area of St. Augustine. Built in the Flagler era (1890), this historic mansion was the Mellon family winter home and hosted such prestigious guests as Eleanor Roosevelt, Ernest Hemingway, Cary Grant and Robert Frost. The House recently underwent a total renovation. The Watermelon feels like a private resort making it perfect for small destination weddings and comfortable family gatherings.

The [Hampton Inn & Suites on Vilano Beach](#) recently completed a major renovation of all guest rooms and common spaces. This seaside inn is a preferred choice of many families and business travelers, and these extensive renovations allow the Hampton Inn & Suites to provide the very best hotel experience for guests for the perfect seaside getaway.

Vilano Beach is a hot spot for touristic development on Florida's Historic Coast. In addition to the Hampton Inn renovations, there are two new hotels scheduled to open in 2021. The Holiday Inn Express Vilano Beach is scheduled to open with 50 rooms in Summer 2021, and the Hyatt Place with an additional 120 rooms is scheduled to open on Vilano Beach in early 2022.

In St. Augustine, the new [Homewood Suites by Hilton St. Augustine](#) sets on the banks of the San Sebastian River and features 117 guest rooms. Hidden Harbor Marina is located on site and St. Augustine's historic attractions, dining and unique shopping are within walking distance.

In the heart of St. Augustine's Historic District, the [Renaissance Historic Downtown St. Augustine Hotel](#) is scheduled to open in late summer 2021. This fantastic hotel is designed to replicate the historic San Marco Hotel that sat on the same spot during the Gilded Age. The new hotel will feature 89 guest rooms, distinct event spaces, world-class dining, traditional Southern hospitality and modern amenities.

Live Music has Returned

Live music has returned to Florida's Historic Coast and visitors can catch their favorite musicians at Northeast Florida's most unique and popular concert venues. This summer and fall, [The Ponte Vedra Concert Hall](#) will be host to performances by Steve Earle & The Dukes, Wynonna Judd, Pablo Cruise, and many more. The [St. Augustine Amphitheatre](#) is the largest outdoor concert hall between Atlanta and Miami, will host Jason Isbell, Rise Again, Cody Johnson, Modest Mouse, Pat Benatar & Neil Giraldo, and few other great performers. The [Colonial Oak Music Park](#) in downtown St. Augustine features free weekend performances by up-and-coming local artists in a relaxed outdoor atmosphere where visitors can walk right in and enjoy free performances. And, the ever popular Free [Music by The Sea](#)

[Concerts](#) every Wednesday night at St. Augustine Beach Pier Park, and Thursday night [Concerts in the Plaza](#) in historic St. Augustine are back for the first time since Summer 2019.

Even More New Ways to Experience the History, Food and Outdoors

Learn about the under-the-radar story of the African American heritage in St. Augustine. Visitors can learn and experience the important African American story at Fort Mose, the first free African American settlement in North America, and the incredible journey through the first 455 years of history at the [Lincolntown Museum and Cultural Center](#), whose newest exhibit includes Lincolntown Lifeways, which explores the bustling Lincolntown neighborhood in the mid-20th century through the eyes of its inhabitants.

The 2021 year-long celebration of the history and culture of Black Americans living and working in St. Augustine is showcased in "[Resilience: Black Heritage in St. Augustine.](#)" This series of virtual programs is a community project celebrating 455+ years of Black stories and contributions in St. Augustine. In addition to the calendar of events, the Resilience program provides a complete listing of collaborative sites, museums and tours where the St. Augustine Black History story can be visited.

Through July at the [Ximenez-Fatio House](#), history lovers are encouraged to experience the new "I Lived Here, As Well" tour which is a performance-style tour that takes guests on a journey through time and history, as seen through the eyes of those who worked here; those invisible to the owners and guests – the servants and enslaved who also occupied this house.

The iconic [Lightner Museum](#) in the former Alcazar Hotel recently completed an extensive renovation. The first floor of the museum features refreshed bright open spaces, and a new exhibit, Illuminate: Lightner Museum's Stained Glass Rediscovered that features 12 newly restored stained-glass windows from the Lightner Collection, in addition to a dramatic dragonfly lamp by Tiffany Studios. The museum is featuring the temporary exhibit [American Impressionism: Treasures from the Daywood Collection](#), through July 5, 2021.

And in 2021, Lightner Museum is revitalizing the [historic south terrace and garden](#), transforming the area into a lively community garden and outdoor museum program space. The museum will activate the space with new and engaging programs: as an outdoor classroom for K-12 students; as a space for sculpture installations by local artists; a community farmer's market; for outdoor film screenings and interactive light installations; and for health and wellness programs such as yoga and fitness boot camps.

St. Augustine's newest attraction, [The Classic Car Museum of St. Augustine](#) showcases an impressive collection of classic cars, providing visitors the opportunity to experience cars from the 1800s to modern day sports cars. With its outdoor spaces which become a stage for the collection, it is becoming a very popular event space for themed parties and social distanced meet-ups.

[Sabrage Sailing Charters](#) has a 63-foot Custom Cooper Catamaran equipped with high-end finishes, and spacious decks that comfortably seats up to 110 guests. This sailing yacht specializes in daily excursions for individuals and group charter events including Sunset Cruise, Eco Cruise, Wine Tasting Cruise, and private events along the pristine waterways surrounding the Nation's Oldest City.

Surfing has always been a favorite pastime on the beaches of Florida's Historic Coast. There are numerous popular spots like Vilano Beach, at St. Augustine Pier, Blowhole, and Matanzas Inlet where surfers are likely to catch the best waves. There is a whole culture in this coastal community that can be explored at the newly opened [St. Augustine Surf Culture Museum](#). Located in the historic Tovar House at the Oldest House Museum Complex, the interactive museum interprets local history stories through images, surf films, artifacts and more.

Great Eats!

New restaurants that opened in recent months include the latest gem in the [Southern Table Hospitality Group](#) crown of Northeast Florida restaurants, the [St. Augustine Fish Camp](#). Set along the docks of the San Sebastian River, the "Fish

Camp” features the freshest seafood- right off the docks at their back door, amazing views, and old favorite entrees with creative, new twists.

Another new eatery that is making a big splash is [The Drunken Horse Wine Bar and Restaurant](#). With its original location in New York City, the Drunken Horse now has a second location on St. Augustine’s historic Charlotte Street in a restored colonial Spanish style house. Sit in the garden courtyards and enjoy a beautifully prepared cheese & charcuterie or relax in the dining room for French dishes paired with an exceptional wine selection.

The newest walking food tours in St. Augustine are presented by [St. Augustine Experiences](#) and feature notable landmarks, local chocolatiers, candy makers & baked good purveyors, unique St. Augustine breweries, and state-of-the-art taprooms, all while learning about the incredible story of St. Augustine. And, [The Tasting Tours](#) foodie adventures recently launched a new fleet of electric touring cars, getting their guests around town in eco-efficient style.

Distillery tours, wine bars and breweries are another spirited way to explore St. Augustine, and there are several wine bars and craft beer tap rooms where locals and visitors alike can enjoy local IPAs and Ales. New to the collection of crafters is the [Sailbird Distilling Company](#), the area’s only nano-distillery specializing in handcrafted small batch rum. They offer free tours and tastings at their St. Augustine location Tuesday – Saturday.

[City Gate Spirits](#) recently celebrated their 1st Anniversary, having distilled and blended over 50,000 bottles of flavored moonshine, rum, and vodka on-site in the heart of the historic district. And to celebrate, they just introduced their latest flavored spirits; Smoked Maple and Cinnamon Whiskeys.

The award-winning St. Augustine Distillery has added a new program - fill your own bottle. In the past decade visitors have been enjoying distillery tours and free samples of the New World Gin, Florida Cane Vodka, and Florida’s best bourbons all produced at St. Augustine’s first distillery. This year, the Distillery is offering [The Fill Your Own Bourbon Bottle Experience](#) which allows guests to step behind production lines to fill, label, cork, and seal their own bottle of cask-strength, unfiltered bourbon.

Getting here is getting a little easier in 2021

Florida’s Historic Coast remains an easy access drive destination, but there is great air service available via [Jacksonville International Airport](#) (JAX), approximately 50 minutes north of St. Augustine and 30 minutes from Ponte Vedra, and [Daytona Beach International Airport](#) (DAB) is approximately 50 minutes to the south. Both airports are serviced by all major carriers.

Getting Here Has Gotten a Little Easier Too

New for 2021, JetBlue now has non-stop daily flights between Las Angeles and Jacksonville; and new daily non-stop flights will begin between Raleigh-Durham and Jacksonville. Also, Silver Airways now provides non-stop, twice a week flights Jacksonville to and from Tampa and Ft. Lauderdale and Jacksonville to and from New Orleans. American Airlines now offers daily non-stop service to and from Dallas/Fort Worth and Daytona Beach, as well as between Philadelphia and Daytona Beach, making it just a little easier to get to Florida’s Historic Coast.

Located midway between Daytona Beach and Jacksonville, Florida’s Historic Coast includes historic St. Augustine, the outstanding golf and seaside elegance of Ponte Vedra, and 42 miles of pristine Atlantic beaches. For more information on events, activities, holiday getaways and vacation opportunities in St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches, go to the Visitors and Convention Bureau website at www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com, become a fan on Facebook or call 1.800.653.2489.

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