



ST. AUGUSTINE
PONTE VEDRA
FLORIDA'S HISTORIC COAST®

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New Things are Coming to St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches in 2023

St. Augustine, FL (January 9, 2023) – The new year is bringing refreshing experiences, hotels, and exceptional dining venues and food events on Florida's Historic Coast®.

The story always begins along the oceanfront of Northeast Florida with the first landing of Ponce de Leon in 1513, the settling of the first permanent European settlement in 1565, and the beginning of Florida tourism during the Gilded age in the 1880s in St. Augustine. Through our history, we learn more and more about the storied past which provides something new about the people and places for visitors to experience and learn. Here is what is new for 2023 on Florida's Historic Coast.

Experiences, Celebrations and Music:

Over the 225-year history of St. Augustine's Ximenez-Fatio House, many travelers came through the doors, enjoying the luxuries of home in a comfortable setting. However, there were some who passed through the doors and were unseen. Every Thursday, Friday and Saturday morning through February 2023, the Ximenez Fatio House Museum presents [*They Lived Here, as Well- Together*](#), a performance tour that tells the story of the house through the perspective of male and female enslaved residents.

An iconic building at the heart of historic St. Augustine with an extraordinary museum collection is the [Lightner Museum](#). Occupying the former Hotel Alcazar, a Gilded Age resort hotel commissioned by railroad magnate Henry Flagler, the [Lightner Museum](#) offers an immersive experience of art, architecture, history, and design. In 2023, the Lightner Museum celebrates the 75th anniversary of its founding and the 135th anniversary of its iconic St. Augustine building. The museum's Diamond Anniversary celebration will feature a series of new exhibitions, events, and opportunities to connect with art, history, culture, and community. The first exhibits to launch will be *75 for 75: Lightner Museum Diamond Anniversary Exhibition*, *Ride On! Historic Bicycles from the Keith Pariani Collection*, and *St. Augustine Through the Lens of William Henry Jackson*.

Around the corner from the Lightner Museum, [Villa Zorayda](#) celebrates its 90th anniversary operating as an attraction. Built by Franklin Weber Smith as his private residence in 1883. Smith utilized his own method of construction, poured concrete and crushed coquina shell, with a design that replicated architectural details of the Alhambra Palace in Granada, Spain. After serving as Smith's winter residence for more than 20 years the building became the Zorayda Club, before being purchased by the Mussallem family and turned into a museum in 1933. In this anniversary year, the Villa Zorayda continues to be

operated by the Mussallem family sharing a small part of Spanish St. Augustine history and educating visitors about different cultures from around the world.

There is a lot that goes into making a destination shine. Especially when attractions are dedicated to preserving history and accurately telling our story. For example, in August 2022, the [St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum](#) completed the most comprehensive restoration of the 165-foot tall light tower since the 1990s, encompassing all areas of the lighthouse, interior, and exterior, with every window and door restored. Restoration of the 1874 structure began on April 25, 2022 and included the replacement of several cast-iron steps, and other damaged treads on the stairs, as well as the repainting of the light tower and repairs to many other parts of the tower.

The [St. Johns Botanical Garden & Nature Preserve](#) is all about conservation of rare and endangered species of plants from around the world, as well as natural resources and native plants and animals. This beautiful preserve located along Deep Creek in rural Hastings, Florida is set to open to the public in Spring 2023 and will provide guided tours and programs, as well as classes on plant identification, xeriscaping, landscaping, native plants, water conservation, cold protection techniques, fertilizing (or not), planting, transplanting, potting, and so much more.

One can make their own history with sports too. The TPC Sawgrass Stadium Course is home to [THE PLAYERS Championship](#), from March 7-12, 2023. Known as the fan-friendliest tournament on the PGA Tour, tickets to THE PLAYERS are now on sale. In addition, [Pickleball at The Yards](#) in Ponte Vedra Beach has been recognized by Golf Inc. on their list of best course renovation in 2021. The new 12-hole course is now open! And as part of their overhaul renovation, The Yards added 12 new courts to accommodate the fastest growing sport in America - Pickleball.

St. Augustine Sailing offers a [Sailing School for ASA Certification](#) providing the knowledge and experience to be confident and safe on all their sailing adventures, whether chartering a boat from a local harbor, on an exotic sailing vacation, or even buying one's own boat. The St. Augustine Sailing ASA offerings include 2-day ASA 101 Basic Keelboat Sailing, ASA 103 Basic Coastal Cruising, and ASA 104 Bareboat Cruising Courses. Additional Coastal Navigation, Advance Coastal Cruising, Celestial Navigation courses and endorsement sessions are also available. St. Augustine Sailing also offers [shared and private charters](#) for visitors to get out and cruise the waters around St. Augustine, relax and enjoy the scenery and the abundant wildlife - from sea turtles, dolphins, and manatees offshore to roseate spoonbills and herons of the marshlands.

Live Music is an important part of the St. Augustine Ponte Vedra Scene. The [Fort Mose Jazz and Blues Series](#) will take place at Fort Mose Historic State Park February 10-19, 2023. This collection of six memorable performances will honor the rich history of American music, and the legacy of the first free Black settlement in what is now the United States. Performances are February 10 – Mavis Staples; February 11 - Christian McBride's New Jawn; February 16 - Valerie June; February 17 - Gladys Knight; February 18 – Rhiannon Giddens; and February 19 – Christone "Kingfish" Ingram. For more information, visit www.DiscoverFortMose.com

The recently announced line up of performances at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall include Dave Mason on February 6; Jesse Dayton on February 17; The Man in Black – Tribute to Johnny Cash on February 26; The Moody Blues John Lodge on March 10; An Evening with They Might Be Giants on March 18; Guster on March 26; Tommy Castro & The Painkillers on April 12, and many more great performers. For more concerts and details about the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall, visit www.pvconcerthall.com

In the Winter and Spring months of 2023, [The Colonial Oak Music Park](#) will host a series of free concerts and performances every Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and sometimes on Saturdays, while Sunday afternoons are dedicated to the broadcast of major sporting events on the Park's large screens. In this intimate outdoor setting, you'll feel as if you were invited to a private party with 200 of your closest friends. And you're bound to make some new friends at shared benches and tables. Regular local favorite performers include the powerful female duet, [Bad Dog Mama](#); First Coast Comedy Improv Group, Latin Fusion band, [Baba Caiman](#); a Blues Brother Tribute Band, [The Tabasco Brothers](#), and many others.

Also adding to the excellent music and performance arts scene on Florida's Historic Coast, [The Waterworks](#), built in 1898 and restored to its former glory through a five year restoration program, began hosting a series of concerts and shows through a collaboration between St. Johns Cultural Council and the City of St. Augustine. The Waterworks plays host to the monthly *Live From The Waterworks*, a series of concerts that support the Annual [Gamble Rogers Festival](#) which honors the late famed St. Augustine native troubadour/singer-storyteller. In addition to the concert series, The Waterworks also provides the perfect backdrop for small stage theatrical performances and storytelling programs.

The sound of music can be heard throughout the old city. The private marketing company Visit St. Augustine just launched a live music calendar App, making it a cinch to find where live music is playing around St. Augustine. The free St. Augustine Live Music App is available on [Apple Store](#) and [Google Play](#) and features 700 local artists each with their own videos, bios, cover shots, and upcoming shows as well as 50 select venues throughout St. Augustine.

Extraordinary Lodging and Dining:

In recent years great hotels like the [Renaissance St. Augustine Historic Downtown](#), [Holiday Inn Express & Suites on Vilano](#), [Homewood Suites by Hilton St. Augustine San Sebastian](#), and [Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Augustine Beach Resort](#) have opened providing comfortable lodging and access to attractions, the beaches and more much easier for visitors to access.. And there are more to come.

Well-deserved recognition and new additions are part of the story too. The Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Augustine Beach Oceanfront Resort recently added an additional 42 Oceanview rooms and was the winner of the "Hospitality & Entertainment" award from the Urban Land Institute of North Florida.

[The Ponte Vedra Inn & Club](#) recently unveiled 64 beautifully renovated luxurious beachfront guest rooms in the Summer House and St. Johns House. The Resort recently added a [Croquet Lawn and Bocce Court](#) for guests to enjoy. This tournament style lawn setup has two golf croquet courts, each court

accommodating up to four players. The courts are available to guests and members daily from 9 a.m. until dusk.

Spring and summer will be extraordinary on Vilano Beach starting in 2023. The long-awaited opening of [Hyatt Place Vilano Beach](#), is scheduled for April 2023. The hotel's spectacular Art Deco design and rooftop dining will provide another 120 guest rooms and gorgeous event spaces just steps from the beach. When the hotel opens, it will feature what is to be one of the St. Augustine area's finest dining experiences, [Pesca Vilano](#) providing coastal cuisine by [Michael's](#). In addition to providing dining to the hotel's guests and community as well as catered hotel events, Pesca will offer fine dining and rooftop culinary experiences with a one-of-a-kind view of St. Augustine's skyline, the Matanzas Bay, St. Augustine Inlet and the Atlantic Ocean.

And there is even more exceptional dining to be found on Florida's Historic Coast this Spring. The Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa in Ponte Vedra Beach will once again offer an exceptional oceanfront dining experience at the resort's newly restored oceanfront member and resort guest-only restaurant, [The Sea Porch Dining Club](#). The Sea Porch will feature guest favorites like crispy calamari salad & the lobster roll.

[Catch 27](#), a local favorite restaurant celebrates 10 years in St. Augustine with big plans for growth. The owners of Catch 27 have been inviting guests to experience local flavor with an emphasis on fresh seafood and seasonal fare inspired by the 27th State of the Union since 2013. Longtime St. Augustine chef, Josh Smith, brings along a passion for crafting innovative dishes from scratch using seasonal ingredients and local produce. Beginning in late January 2023, customers can help celebrate by experiencing the restaurant's new seasonal menu, including shareable plates, entrees with a Southern twist, a half-dozen specialty cocktails, and mouthwatering desserts. Later in the year, the restaurant will announce an exciting expansion which is in the works.

Ancient City Brunch Bar on St. George Street, created and designed by the Schroeder family as a high school entrepreneurial class project during the COVID shut down, serves delicious selections of bagels, pastries, scones - savory and sweet - are made from family recipes and served on artful brunch boards. In the spirit of supporting the local culinary scene, the Brunch Bar is now a series of local chef-led cooking demonstrations called [Ancient City Cooking Experiences](#), that celebrate local foods and our culinary heritage.

Born out of a desire to share the concept of asado-style cooking, the [AsadoLife Dining Experience & Marketplace](#) recently opened in a new venue with a covered waterfront patio offering panoramic views of the San Sebastian River. In 2014, Nick and Christie Carrera started a grill company, [Urban Asado](#) in their garage. The concept was to provide great grilling experiences for their customers. Before long,



they were partnering with local chefs and doing pop-ups and grilling demonstrations that the St. Augustine food scene fell in love with. In October 2022 in partnership with Chef Matt Brown, the Carreras opened AsadoLife at the St. Augustine



Shipyards on the San Sebastian River, allowing the public to regularly enjoy the sights, sounds, and aromas of live fire cooking, taking al fresco dining on the waterfront in Northeast Florida to a whole new level.

In addition to the new experiences and space on Florida's Historic Coast, there are [numerous events that take place throughout the year](#) such as, [THE PLAYERS Championship®](#), the [St. Augustine Food & Wine Festival](#), [Nights of Lights](#) and great [historic reenactments](#) which create great reasons to come experience the history, music, flavor, and sportingly fun excitement that is an important part of the story of Florida's Historic Coast.

There are even more ways to share a getaway to Florida's Historic Coast. Visit www.floridashistoriccoast.com/places-to-stay/deals/ to take advantage of great deals throughout the year.

Located midway between Daytona Beach and Jacksonville, Florida's Historic Coast is home to St. Augustine, the oldest continuously occupied European settlement in the U.S. and attracts visitors from all over the world to experience its old-world charm, historic landmarks, pristine beaches, and world-class golfing as the home of the PGA Tour and location of THE PLAYERS Championship. 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.