



Undiscovered Treasures of Florida

“Sarasota, Tarpon Springs, Crystal River, Silver Springs, and Jacksonville”

February 20—March 1, 2023

There are places in Florida where the landscape is not a theme park or a skyscraper. This part of Florida is where the natural environment is a long-standing tradition and you'll find it off the beaten path in the state's **“undiscovered” wonders of nature, history and culture.** During our 360-mile journey, which spans from Sarasota to Jacksonville Beach, you will experience horse farms, crystal springs, powder-sand beaches, and the country's oldest settlement of **St. Augustine.**

Join Fran and leave the **South Dakota Winter** behind! Let her show you places in Florida, where vacation surprises come out of the blue and where you will experience the unpredictable, unbelievable, and unforgettable **Undiscovered Treasures of Florida.**



Edison & Ford Winter Estate
The Highlights



Monday, Feb 20

Overnight Sioux Falls Airport

We will transport to the Sioux Falls airport, where you will have an overnight stay at the **AeroStay Hotel**.

Tuesday, Feb, 21

Sarasota, Florida

Breakfast & Dinner

A grab and go breakfast will start your day before you board your morning flight for Tampa, Florida. We will transfer to our hotel for a three night stay at **The Carlisle Inn** incorporates all the comforts of home. Enjoy a combination of modern amenities and Amish traditions, including handsome handcrafted furniture and beds in each guestroom. Dinner tonight will be an **Amish Feast** at the **Der Dutchman Restaurant**.

Wednesday, Feb. 22

Ringling Museum, Shopping or Lido Beach

Breakfast

On our morning tour of Sarasota we will explore the **Ringling Museum**, and the estate of **John and Mable Ringling-Ca' d'Zan**, which also includes the **Circus Museum**, and **Bayfront Gardens**. The Circus Museum houses parade wagons, posters, glittering costumes, the Ringling's fully-restored private railcar and the cannon that shot daring performers through the air. Wonder at the must-be-seen-to-be-believed 44,000-piece Howard Bros. circus model celebrating the entertainment that has delighted America for generations.

In the afternoon we will operate a shuttle for those who would like to go shopping in the famous **St. Armand's Circle** or relax on beautiful **Lido Beach** on the Gulf of Mexico. Dinner tonight is on your own so you may try one of the many wonderful restaurants in St. Armand's Circle.

Thursday, Feb. 23

Fort Myers & Sunset Cruise

Breakfast, Dinner Cruise

Fort Myers is popular for its beaches, fishing, shopping—and the opportunity to learn about two of the nation's most famed inventors and business leaders. Visits to the **Thomas Edison** and **Henry Ford** winter estates are a must. Back in 1916, Ford bought land in downtown Fort Myers, next door to Edison, his mentor. Now, both estates serve as museums that honor their founders and remind all of us about what they accomplished.

At the **Edison and Ford Winter Estates** we will enjoy a guided tour of more than 20 acres of historic buildings and gardens including the 1928 Edison Botanical Research Laboratory. Open to the public since 1947, Edison Ford is a **National Register Historic Site** and is one of the most visited historic home sites in America.

This evening we will escape aboard the **Marina Jack II!** Join us for a relaxing, narrated sightseeing **sunset dinner cruise** through the inter-coastal waters and the Gulf of Mexico and enjoy delicious dining, outstanding views, and exceptional service.

Friday, Feb. 24

Tarpon Springs, Sarasota

Breakfast and Dinner

Tarpon Springs has the largest population of Greek and Greek-Americans in the U.S. The city is home to the **World Famous Sponge Docks**, which are still an active working waterfront as they have been since the 1800s. As the sponging industry grew, so did the city. Tarpon Springs was once known as the **"Venice of the South"** and has long touted the moniker **"The Sponge Capital of the World."** Walk along Dodecanese Boulevard to see docked sponge boats, shops selling sea sponges, and restaurants serving up authentic Greek cuisine. The early sponge industry created a need for eating places at the Docks for the boat crews. Soon, as news of this unusual industry spread, people began to come to the docks to see the sponges. Shops opened so the tourists could purchase sponges and other souvenirs.

Today we will embark on a 2-hour cruise down the **Anclote River and into the Gulf of Mexico**. During your ride, keep your eyes peeled for dolphins and sea turtles. We will land on the island where you can get a close up view of the lighthouse and stroll the beach for shells.

We will continue on to the **Plantation Inn** for the next two nights. Dinner this evening will be at **Kane's Cattle Co.**

The Plantation Inn

Is a beautiful 50-year-old, 232-acre eco-friendly resort offering comfortable accommodations, a full-service spa, and is surrounded by the natural springs of Kings Bay. This Bay in Crystal River is one of the largest aquifers in the state and home to more than 400 West Indian Manatees that migrate each year to the 72 degrees of the springs. Our onsite activities include golf, boating, fishing, and a beautiful resort pool and pool bar if you choose just to relax.

Saturday, Feb. 25

Manatees Cruise and Relaxation

Breakfast and Dinner

Today we will awake on the banks of Crystal River and Kings Bay. It is a first magnitude Florida springs system and a leading winter refuge for the **Florida Manatee**. In fact, it is so important to the survival of manatees that **The Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge** is the only Refuge in the United States dedicated to the preservation and protection of a single species!

This morning we will embark on a 60 min. Manatee Cruise. The boat departs at 7 am because the Manatees all gather at night for sleep and warm, so going in the morning increases our chances of seeing more Manatees.

Optional Activity: Swim with the Manatees! Wet suit, goggles and all gear are provided. **Cost:** \$90.00. This must be pre-booked with final payment.

This afternoon is free to relax and enjoy the resort in anyway you wish. Dinner tonight will be at the Plantation Inn.

Sunday, Feb. 26

Ocala, Silver Springs, Horse Country

Breakfast and Dinner

This morning we leave Crystal River behind and head East. Our travels today will take us through the heart of Florida. The scenery will be tall pines, lakes, rivers, and many of Florida's 1,000 natural springs.

Ocala Horse "Capital of the World": Whether it's the love of competition or enjoying a leisurely ride through nature trails, the history that comes with a long legacy of champions being born, bred, and broken in Ocala/Marion County makes it a true equestrian escape. During our narrated trip through Ocala's horse country you will marvel at the large farms and beautiful horses that call Ocala home. A stop will be made at the **World Equestrian Center** where you will marvel at this huge facility as well as see the beautiful horses preparing for world competitions.

Glass bottom boats have wowed visitors to **Silver Springs** since the 1870s with breathtaking views of underwater life and the many springs that feed the Silver River. Take a tour aboard one of the historic Glass Bottom Boats and marvel at the beauty and sheer size of **Mammoth Spring**, the river's head spring. You'll explore many other beautiful feeder springs and see countless species of fish, ancient Native American and Spanish artifacts and even underwater movie props from the days when Hollywood productions flourished at the park!

We will continue on to Jacksonville Beach for our three night beachfront stay at the **Courtyard by Marriott**. Dinner will be in the vicinity of the hotel tonight.

Monday, Feb. 27

St. Augustine

Breakfast and Dinner

Its unique scenery and history set this city apart from any other in the country. This old city has a quaint feel but boasts a big appeal. Visitors can see why when they stroll along the brick-lined streets and delight in the city's European flavor, with **centuries-old buildings, horse-drawn carriages, hidden courtyards**, and so much more. Saint Augustine has plenty of history to explore -- more than **450 years** of it!

Upon our to St. Augustine, we will go to the Old Jail to get our tickets for the **Old Town Trolley**. We will board our private trolley and take a 60 minute driving tour of this historic city. Each passenger will then get a full day hop-on hop-off pass after our tour, so you can go back to the places you want to spend some more time. Don't miss historic **St. George** street for all your shopping and lunch on your own. Later we will enjoy dinner at the **North Florida Fish Camp** for a traditional Florida dinner.





Tuesday, Feb. 28

Amelia Island

Breakfast and Dinner

Amelia is 13-miles long and 4-miles wide at its widest point, located just south of Cumberland Island, Georgia. Amelia Island is rich with history, such as the landmark **Historic District, Fort Clinch State Park, Old Town,** and **Fernandina** with its **Victorian-era architecture**. Amelia Island was voted #6 among Top 10 North America Islands by Conde Nast Traveler's 2018 Reader's Choice Awards.

We will visit the **Amelia Island History Museum** followed by a morning riding tour of the Island. Lunch is on your own in **Fernandina** followed by great shopping in this Quaint Victorian Town. Return to Jacksonville Beach for some beach time before we enjoy a Farewell group dinner.

Wednesday, March 1

Fly Home

Breakfast

This morning following breakfast you will be transferred to Jacksonville International Airport for your flight home.

Your Undiscovered Treasures Tour Includes

- Transportation to/from airport
- Pre-hotel stay
- Round trip airfare
- 9 Nights lodging
- All sightseeing and admissions as per itinerary
- All driver and guide gratuities
- 9 breakfasts, 6 dinners and sunset dinner cruise
- All transportation in Florida
- All taxes and fees
- Travel Protection
- Fran to handle all the details

Itinerary Variations: First Dakota Travel and its suppliers constantly strive to improve our itinerary's and all features. If improvements can be made or if unforeseen conditions beyond our control make changes necessary, we reserve the right to alter the itinerary or substitute hotels. First Dakota Travel will not be held responsible for any of these occurrences.

Cancellation Policy: \$700 deposit is non-refundable after 8/1/2022. Travel Protection is included in the cost of the trip. If you keep the protection that is included and need to cancel for a covered reason, you may submit your claim to the insurance company. If the trip protection is declined at trip registration, no refund will be given after 8/1/2022.

Tour Cost per person double occupancy:

\$3,699

Deposit: \$700 per person
with reservation

Final Payment: October 1, 2022

To register contact:

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