

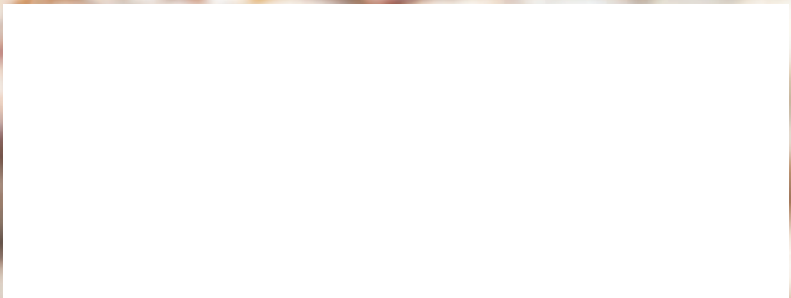
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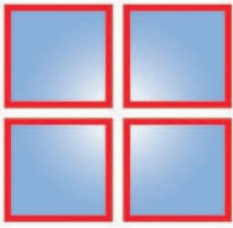


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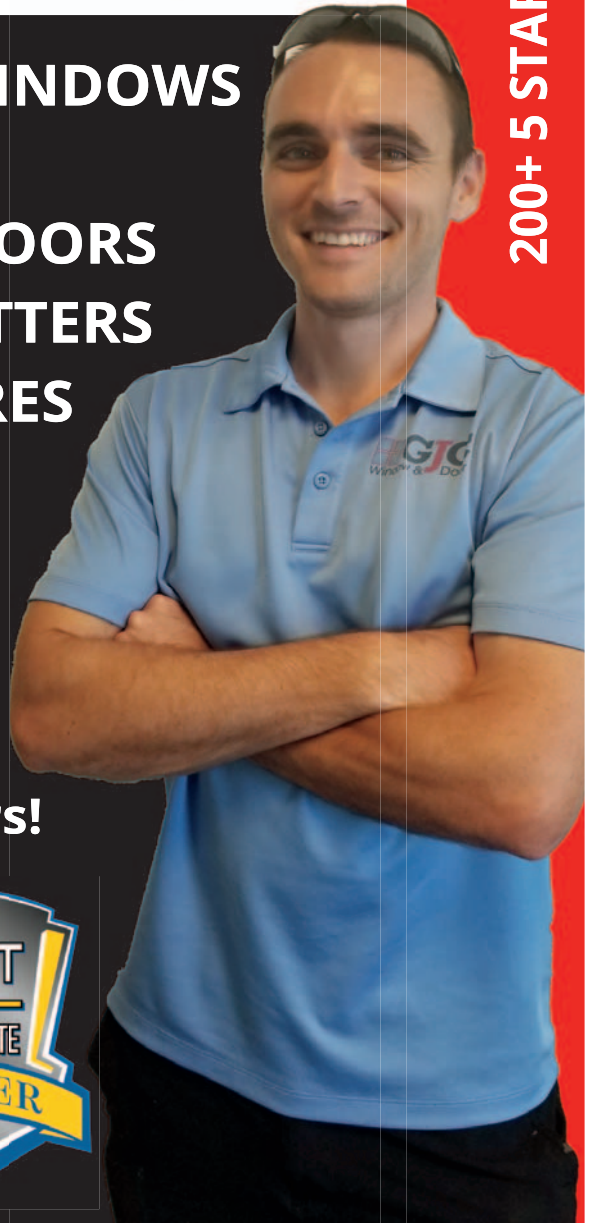
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WELCOME

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ADOBE STOCK

Congratulations!

You've just moved to Southwest Florida where most people come to vacation.

The Daily Sun is publishing this comprehensive guide as a very special way of welcoming newcomers and providing the information they need to settle in and have some fun.

As you enjoy the warm weather, beaches and sunsets, explore communities in the area to discover what they have to offer.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Learn more about Babcock Ranch, America's first solar-powered town located just northeast of Fort Myers on Babcock Ranch Road/State Road 31, at the Discovery Center.



PHOTO FROM ARCADIARODEO.COM

A popular DeSoto County event is the annual Arcadia All-Florida Championship Rodeo.

ARCADIA

Arcadia is a city and county seat of DeSoto County with a historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It has a rich history of orange growing, cattle-raising and hosting rodeos as well as the DeSoto County Fair and the Watermelon Festival. Arcadia also has a variety of spots for camping, boating and other outdoor recreation. Nearby is the Bearadise Ranch Bear Preserve established in 1926 as a learning facility to promote awareness for habitat preservation and conservation for all bear species.

BABCOCK RANCH

Babcock Ranch is a solar-powered community in southeastern Charlotte County and northeastern Lee County. It also is a regional outdoor adventure destination because of its trails, lakes and eco-tours. The community has a charter school, restaurants, a lakeside boardwalk and a band shell for live entertainment.

BOCA GRANDE

Boca Grande is an affluent residential community and resort town on Gasparilla Island. It is highlighted by a circa-1890 lighthouse and has a walking- and biking-friendly downtown small shops and restaurants. The Gasparilla Inn, with its three croquet lawns, is the centerpiece. Boca Grande has long been an elite retreat for business leaders, politicians and movie stars, including Katherine Hepburn.

ENGLEWOOD

Englewood straddles two counties, Charlotte and Sarasota. The heart of the arts district,

~ Continued on page 10

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FILE PHOTO

The Boca Grande Lighthouse Museum on the south tip of Gasparilla Island.

as well as popular restaurants, is on West Dearborn Street. The Ringling College of Art & Design also has a center in town. Visitors can hike, camp and ride bikes just east of Englewood in Myakka State Forest. Nearby Manasota Key, a beautiful barrier Island, is home to the Hermitage Artist Retreat where some of the nation's top artists escape to create.

NORTH FORT MYERS

North Fort Myers is on the Caloosahatchee River and has a blend of town and country. There are plenty of restaurants and shops as well as nature trails and rural attractions such as the Rosy Tomorrows Heritage Farm. It's also home to The Shell Factory, the world's largest collection of shells and coral.

NORTH PORT

The community has more than 26 parks and open spaces which appeal to people who love the outdoors. There are several miles of horse trails, mountain bike trails and natural hiking paths. Myakka State Forest is just south of North Port, and is a great spot for hiking and camping. Also nearby is Warm Mineral Springs visited by thousands of people seeking the soothing mineral waters believed to be helpful in healing many ailments.

PORT CHARLOTTE

The unincorporated community has a variety of shopping, recreation and cultural opportunities. The Port Charlotte Town Center is the area's major mall and the Charlotte Sports Park is the spring-training home to the Tampa Bay Rays. Port Charlotte has more than 165 miles of waterways providing access to Charlotte Harbor and the Gulf of Mexico. Tippecanoe Environmental Park offers hiking trails and wildlife viewing through 380 acres of scrub and pine flat-woods.

PUNTA GORDA

The city is the only incorporated community in Charlotte County. It reinvented itself after Hurricane Charley in 2004 but retained its

Old Florida feel with its charming historic downtown that has restaurants, shops and galleries. Situated along the water where the Peace River meets the Charlotte Harbor, it attracts people to the Harborwalk and Fishermen's Village. The Charlotte Harbor & Events Center also has a variety of shows and events.

SARASOTA

This city was once the winter home of the Ringling Brothers Circus and offers a blend of culture, fine dining, pristine beaches and shopping opportunities. Attractions include the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Ca' d'Zan Mansion and Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. St. Armand's Circle, Burns Square and Main Street downtown are popular shopping spots.



SHUTTERSTOCK

Sunset over the Gulf of Mexico at the Venice Fishing Pier in Venice.

VENICE

Venice takes its name from its more famous Italian namesake. It has a charming historic mainstreet with northern Italian architecture and beautifully landscaped boulevards full of quaint shops and restaurants. Venice also is known as the "Shark Tooth Capital of the World." Vacationers enjoy the beaches, golf courses, nature trails and other outdoor activities.

WELLEN PARK

Wellen Park is a collection of communities in both North Port and Venice with resort-style amenities and planned activities. Each have different builders and atmospheres. The nearby CoolToday Park is home to the Atlanta Braves spring training but also has multi-purpose fields for year-round activities including youth sports and special events.



SHUTTERSTOCK



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APPETIZERS

- FRIED PICKLES**\$10
Hand breaded and seasoned pickle chips served with ranch
- BBQ NACHOS**\$13
Fried to order chips topped with black beans, colby jack cheese, pico di gallo, with a side of sour cream
- Your choice of meats:**
Pulled pork, Pulled Chicken, Brisket (\$3 upcharge for brisket)
(Add our housemade Brisket Chili for \$3 upcharge)
- CHEESE TOTS**\$11
Fried later tots topped with our house cured smoked bacon bits
(Add our housemade Brisket Chili for \$3 upcharge)
- PORK BELLY BURNT ENDS**\$15
Homemade fried rice topped with smoked pork belly burnt ends dipped in a homemade sweet tal honey sauce, topped with sesame seeds
- SMOKED WINGS**\$13
10 of our famous smoked wings dipped in your choice of sauce
- Your choice of Sauces:**
Sweet Garlic Chili Sauce, Original BBQ Sauce, Memphis Sweet BBQ Sauce, Tangy Gold Sauce, or Buffalo Sauce
- Buffalo Cauliflower**\$10
- Chips & Queso**\$9.50
- Loaded Cheese Fries**\$12.50
Crinkle cut fries topped with queso and your choice of meat: Pulled Pork, Pulled Chicken, or Brisket \$3 Upcharge
- Loaded Baked Potato**\$13
Baked Potato topped with Butter, Sour Cream, Mac & Cheese, cheddar jack cheese Sweet BBQ sauce, chives and your choice of meat: Pulled Pork, Pulled Chicken or Brisket \$3 Upcharge
- Mozzarella Sticks**\$12.50
Jumbo Mozzarella sticks served with homemade marinara sauce
- BBQ Quesadilla**\$13
Cheddar Jack Cheese, Red Onion, Cilantro, Sweet BBQ sauce with your choice of meat: Pulled Pork, Pulled Chicken or Brisket \$3 Upcharge. Pico-di-Galo and Sour Cream on the side.

SALADS

- ALL SALADS COME WITH ICEBERG LETTUCE, TOMATOES, RED ONION, CUCUMBERS, TOPPED WITH CHEDDAR JACK CHEESE DRESSINGS:** Ranch, Blue Cheese or Greek
- HOUSE SALAD**\$6
- GRILLED CHICKEN SALAD**\$12
Boneless chicken breasts
- DUBZ SALAD**\$14
Brisket, pulled chicken, pulled pork
- BBQ SALAD**\$12
CHOICE OF (1) MEAT:
Brisket, pulled chicken, or pulled pork

BEST BBQ!

A LA CARTE

- PORTION CHOICES: 1/2 POUND OR 1 POUND
- BRISKET**
Sliced to order with your choice of lean or moist
1/2: \$15 Full: \$25
 - PULLED PORK**
1/2: \$10 Full: \$17
 - PULLED CHICKEN**
1/2: \$10 Full: \$17
 - SAUSAGE**
Jalapeño and cheese or Polish sausage
1/2: \$10 Full: \$17
 - SMOKED WINGS**
Slowly smoked then fried and dipped in a sweet garlic chili sauce
10 pc: \$13 20 pc: \$26 30 pc: \$35
 - SMOKED CHICKEN**
1/4: \$8 1/2: \$13 Full: \$20
 - BBY BACK RIBS**
1/2: \$18 Full: \$27
 - SPARE RIBS**
3 Bone: \$9 1/2: \$18 Full: \$28

BEST LUNCH!

KIDS MENU

- WITH CHOICE OF SIDE AND DRINK
- CHICKEN STRIPS**\$10
 - 2 RIBS**\$10
 - 1/4 CHICKEN**\$10
Dark Meat Only
 - KIDS MAC**\$10
 - CHOICE OF (1) MEAT ONLY:**
Brisket, pulled chicken or pulled pork
(No side options for Kids Mac)

BEST WINGS!

SANDWICHES

- ALL SANDWICHES COME WITH A SIDE OF YOUR CHOICE AND A PICKLE**
- ADD COLESLAW ON TOP OF YOUR SANDWICH FOR ONLY \$1!**
- PULLED PORK SANDWICH**\$12
 - PULLED CHICKEN SANDWICH**\$12
 - BRISKET SANDWICH**\$14
 - PIGGY SANDWICH**\$14
Pulled pork topped with a smoked and charred jalapeño and cheddar sausage
 - BBQ SANDWICH**\$14
Pulled pork & brisket
 - TAMMERS SPECIAL**\$13
Garlic Texas toast topped with pulled pork, mac and cheese drizzled with Memphis sweet BBQ sauce
 - CHEESEBURGER**\$14
8oz. Black Angus beef cooked to your choice of temperature, lettuce, tomato, topped with our house cured smoked bacon and American cheese
 - HICKORY CHICKEN**\$14
Boneless chicken breast grilled and based with BBQ sauce, lettuce, tomato, topped with our house cured smoked bacon and American cheese
 - Brisket Reuben**\$15
 - BBQ Philly**\$13
Sautéed onions and red bell pepper with your choice of meat: Pulled Pork, Pulled Chicken or Brisket \$3 Upcharge. Topped with white American Cheese
 - Fried Pork Tenderloin Sandwich**\$14
Hand battered and Breaded Fried Pork Tenderloin on a bun topped with Lettuce, Tomato, Red Onion and Mayonnaise

PICK UP PACKS

- FOR PARTIES OF 4 OR MORE: \$14 a person
- THE FOLLOWING MEATS ARE AN UPCHARGE PER PERSON:
Brisket: \$2 Ribs: \$3
- CHOOSE 2 MEATS • UP TO 2 SIDES**
- CHOOSE 1 TYPE OF BREAD**
Buns, Cornbread
- CHOOSE YOUR SAUCES**
Original, Sweet, Spicy, Tangy, Gold
- BURNT ENDS NOT AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP PACKS

PLATTERS

- EACH PLATTER COMES WITH YOUR CHOICE OF TWO SIDES AND A PIECE OF CORNBREAD**
- Your Choice of Meat:**
Pulled Pork, Pulled Chicken, Wings, Polish Sausage, Jalapeño Cheddar Sausage, Smoked Chicken, USDA Prime Brisket, Choice of Lean or Moist Brisket (\$3 Upcharge), Brisket Burnt Ends (\$5 Upcharge), Pork Belly Burnt Ends (\$5 Upcharge)
- 1 Meat Platter \$16**
2 Meat Platter \$21
3 Meat Platter \$27
- SPARE RIBS (ST. LOUIS STYLE)**
3 Bones: \$17 1/2: \$21 Full: \$31
- BBY BACK RIBS**
1/2: \$23 Full: \$33
- SMOKED CHICKEN PLATTER (WHITE MEAT \$1 UPCHARGE)**
1/4: \$14 Half: \$17
- RIB AND 1 MEAT**
1/2 (Baby): \$29 3 Bones (St. Louis): \$25
1/2 (St. Louis): \$29
- RIB AND 2 MEAT**
1/2 (Baby): \$33 3 Bones (St. Louis): \$27
1/2 (St. Louis): \$33

BBQ SAUCE SELECTION

ORIGINAL, MEMPHIS SWEET, CAROLINA TANGY GOLD, JALAPEÑO MANGO, HOT BBQ

SIDES

- COLESLAW**\$4
Pint: \$12 Quart: \$18 1/2 Gallon: \$32
- POTATO SALAD**\$4
Pint: \$8 Quart: \$12 1/2 Gallon: \$20
- MAC AND CHEESE**\$5
Pint: \$12 Quart: \$18 1/2 Gallon: \$32
- BAKED BEANS**\$5
Pint: \$12 Quart: \$18 1/2 Gallon: \$32
- GREEN BEANS**\$7
Topped with our house cured smoked bacon bits
- CRINKLE CUT FRIES**\$5
- HUSH PUPPIES**\$7
- MAC BITES**\$6.50
Made with our homemade mac and cheese, topped with our house cured smoked bacon bits
- MEXICAN STREET CORN**\$6.50
Corn off the cob mixed with a housemade crema, cilantro, cayenne pepper and smoked jalapeños topped with cotija cheese
Pint: \$12 Quart: \$18 1/2 Gallon: \$32
- FRIED OKRA**\$6.50
- COLLARD GREENS**\$7
Pint: \$12 Quart: \$18 1/2 Gallon: \$32
- BRISKET CHILI**\$7
Pint: \$12 Quart: \$18 1/2 Gallon: \$32
- DESSERT**
- HOUSEMADE BANANA PUDDING**\$6
- REESE'S CHEESECAKE**\$10

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COMMUNITY Events

MARCH

FOREVER SIMON & GARFUNKEL: 7 p.m.

March 1. Charlotte Performing Arts Center, 701 Carmalita St., Punta Gorda. <https://sunevents.com>

FOREVER DONNA: Featuring Rainere Martin: 7 p.m. March 1. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. <https://veniceperformingartscenter.com>

TASTE OF PUNTA GORDA: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. March 2. Laishley Park, 120 Laishley Court, Punta Gorda. Businesses serve “tastes” of their signature dishes. Be sure to bring \$1s and \$5s to purchase restaurant “tastes.” Plus Kids Fun Zone with bounce houses, rock climbing, stealth laser tag, and other interactive activities. The Punta Gorda Police Department’s Community Trailer will be present. The Marker 5 Band will kick off the day, and Deb and the Dynamics will entertain everyone through the afternoon. <https://tasteofpuntaorda.org>

MARDI GRAS 2025: 4-7 p.m. March 4. Join Venice MainStreet as it celebrates Mardi Gras in Downtown Venice! Enjoy live music as you take a stroll on Fat Tuesday. www.visitvenicefl.org

SIMPLY CLAPTON: A Tribute to Slowhand with Mike Imbasciani: 7:30 p.m. March 4. Visani, 2400 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte. 941-629-9191 or www.visani.net



SUN FILE PHOTO

Englewood Beach Waterfest takes place Oct. 10-12. The community Block Party will be on Oct. 10, at the Dignam Family Stage at Pioneer Plaza on Englewood’s Historic Dearborn Street. Racing is Oct. 10-12 at Englewood Beach. englewoodbeachwaterfest.com

‘THIS MAGIC MOMENT’ — BAY KINGS

BAND: 7:30 p.m. March 4. Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, 75 Taylor St., Punta Gorda. 941-255-1022 or www.charlotteplayers.org

‘FOREVER JOHNNY CASH’: 7 p.m. March 5.

Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

FOREVER ORBISON: 7 p.m. March 6. Charlotte Performing Arts Center, 701 Carmalita St., Punta Gorda. <https://sunevents.com>

ARCADIA ALL-FLORIDA CHAMPIONSHIP RODEO: March 6-9. Mosaic Arena. 2450 N.E. Roan St., Arcadia. www.arcadiarodeo.com

JOHN JORGENSON QUINTET: 7 p.m. March 7. Englewood Methodist Church, 700 E. Dearborn St., Englewood. 941-474-5588 or www.EnglewoodMethodist.com

BRASS TRANSIT: 7 p.m. March 7. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. <https://veniceperformingartscenter.com>

ABSOLUTE QUEEN: 7 p.m. March 7. Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, 75 Taylor St., Punta Gorda. <https://sunevents.com>



PHOTOS BY ROB O'NEAL/KEYS CITIZEN

The 2025 Florida International Airshow takes place Nov.1-2 at the Punta Gorda Airport. www.floridaairshow.com

~ Continued on page 14

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COMMUNITY Events

BRITISH ROCK INVASION: Tribute to Bad Company and Foreigner: 7 p.m. March 7. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

BEATLES VS STONES: 7 p.m. March 8. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. <https://veniceperformingartscenter.com>

SULLIVAN STREET CRAFT FESTIVAL: March 8-9. 331 Sullivan St., Punta Gorda. www.artfestival.com

THE ASTROYACHTS: 7:30 p.m. March 9. Venice Performing Arts Center at Venice High School, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

CIRCUS SARASOTA: Feb. 15-March 9. High-flying action, thrills, comedic antics and acts that defy expectations and the boundaries of physical limitations. Big Top on Nathan Benderson Park, 5851 Nathan Benderson Circle, Sarasota. 941-355-9805 or CircusArts.org



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In November, enjoy the majesty and madness of knights, jesters, minstrels, belly dancers, wenches, and sword swingers at the Sarasota Medieval Fair. Woods of Mallaranny, 29847 FL-70 E., Myakka City. www.SarasotaMedievalFair.com.

U.S. BEE GEES: 7:30 p.m. March 10. Visani, 2400 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte. 941-629-9191 or www.visani.net

THE SILVER FOXES: March 11-16. The “youngest” cast in town will once again regale you with song, dance and humor in their new variety show. Venice Theatre, Raymond Center, 140 Tampa Ave. W., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

‘A MURDER IS ANNOUNCED’: March 13-30. Miss Marple must solve a murder that is published before it happens. Charlotte Players, 1182 Market Circle, Port Charlotte. 941-255-1022 or www.charlotteplayers.org

FOREVER ORBISON: 7 p.m. March 12. Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice. <https://sunevents.com>

TONY SANDS: START SPREADIN’ THE NEWS’ WITH LIZA AND FRANK: 7 p.m. March 13. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

SIMPLY TINA: TRIBUTE TO TINA TURNER: 7 p.m. March 14. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL: March 14-16. Interactive butterfly exhibit, butterfly plant sale, petting zoo, kids game, bounce houses and food truck. Prana Farms, 6026 Sweden Blvd, Punta Gorda. prana-farms.com

THE VENICE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: ‘Crazy for Gershwin’: March 14-15. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., building 5, Venice. 941-207-8822 or www.thevenicesymphony.org

JOHNNY ROGERS: ‘THE HISTORY OF ROCK N’ ROLL’: 7 p.m. March 15. Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice. www.scgov.net/vcc

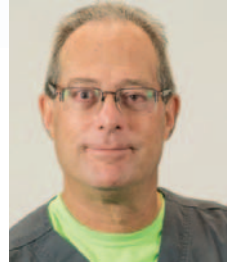
VENICE MUSICALE: ‘SPRING SENSATIONS’: 3 p.m. March 15. William H. Jerve, Jr., Venice Library, 300 Nokomis Ave., Venice. VeniceMusicale.org

~ Continued on page 16



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COMMUNITY Events

CAPSTAN CHAMBER SERIES, VENICE

SYMPHONY BRASS QUARTET: 3:30 p.m. March 16. Solis Hall at Wellen Park, 19745 Wellen Park Blvd., Wellen Park. 941-207-8822 or www.thevenicesymphony.org

U.S. BEE GEES: 3 p.m., 7 p.m. March 16. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or www.gulftheater.org

NORM LEWIS: 7 p.m. March 16. Venice Performing Arts Center at Venice High School, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

THE FLORIDA PHILHARMONIC: 'Endings and New Beginnings': 3:30 p.m. March 16. Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, 11330 Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda. 941-529-6094 or www.thefloridaphilharmonic.org

'LUCK BE A LADY' FEATURING WHITNEY GRACE: 7:30 p.m. March 17. Charlotte Players, 1182 Market Circle, Port Charlotte. 941-255-1022 or www.charlotteplayers.org

THE WILBURYS TRIBUTE: 7:30 p.m. March 17. Visani, 2400 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte. 941-629-9191 or www.visani.net

'A TRIBUTE TO ELVIS' STARRING DWIGHT ICENHOWER: 7:30 p.m. March 17. Venice Performing Arts Center at Venice High School, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

'SPLISH SPLASH' — THE MUSIC OF BOBBY DARIN: 7:30 p.m. March 18. Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, 75 Taylor St., Punta Gorda. 941-255-1022 or www.charlotteplayers.org

ALABAMA SUNSET: Tribute to Alabama: 7 p.m. March 19. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

VENICE MUSICALE'S ENCORE CHORUS: 'All Nature Sings': 3 p.m. March 20. St. Mark's Church, 508 Riviera St., Venice. VeniceMusicales.org



PHOTO PROVIDED BY SIESTA KEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Artists converge on Siesta Key to compete in an amazing sand sculpting competition at the International Sand Sculpting Festival Nov. 14-17 at 948 Beach Road, Sarasota. Nov. 14-17. www.siestakeycrystalclassicc.com.

DSB: TRIBUTE TO JOURNEY: 7 p.m. March 21. Englewood Methodist Church, 700 E. Dearborn St., Englewood. 941-474-5588 or www.EnglewoodMethodist.com

'CIRQUE DES VOIX': March 21-22. The Key Chorale and the Cirque Orchestra combine with an all-star cast of circus artists set to take you to another universe. Big Top at Nathan Benderson Park, 5851 Nathan Benderson Circle, Sarasota. 941-355-9805 or CircusArts.org

AIR MARGARITAVILLE: JIMMY BUFFETT TRIBUTE: 7 p.m. March 21. Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice. www.scgov.net/vcc

ABBA REVISITED: 7 p.m. March 21. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. <https://veniceperformingartscenter.com>

'CHEEK TO CHEEK' — TRIBUTE TO THE TONY BENNETT: 7 p.m. March 21. Steve Leeds and Sharon Owens honor this powerful duo Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

THE VENICE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: 'THE RAT PACK IS BACK': March 22. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., building 5, Venice. 941-207-8822 or www.thevenicesymphony.org

~ Continued on page 18

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COMMUNITY Events

NORTH PORT CONCERT BAND: 'AN AMERICAN ROAD TRIP': 3 p.m. March 23. North Port Performing Arts Center, 6400 W. Price Blvd., North Port. northportconcertband.com

'RAY! THE SOULFUL LEGEND' — TRIBUTE TO RAY CHARLES: 7:30 p.m. March 24. Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

SIMPLY CLAPTON: A TRIBUTE TO SLOWHAND WITH MIKE IMBASCIANI: 7:30 p.m. March 24. Visani, 2400 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte. 941-629-9191 or www.visani.net

VENICE CONCERT BAND: 'THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE': 7 p.m. March 24. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. 941-218-3779 or [https://veniceconcertband.com](http://veniceconcertband.com)

MAJESTY OF ROCK: JOURNEY TRIBUTE: 7:30 p.m. March 25. Visani, 2400 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte. 941-629-9191 or www.visani.net

THE BEACH BUOYS: 3 p.m., 7 p.m. March 26. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or [https://gulftheater.org](http://gulftheater.org)

CLASSIC SEGER: 7 p.m. March 28. Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice. <https://sunevents.com>

MEMORIES: THE TRIBUTE TO BARBRA STREISAND: 7 p.m. March 28. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

'RUSALKA' — GULFSHORE OPERA ACCOMPANIED BY THE FLORIDA PHILHARMONIC: 7 p.m. March 29. Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, 11330 Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda. 239-529-3925 or www.gulfshoreopera.org

PULL MUSIC FESTIVAL: 2 p.m.-midnight March 29. Featuring Yohan Marley (grandson of Bob Marley), Street Level Uprising, Indigo 1, Fame, DJ and more. Charlotte County Fairgrounds, 2333 El Jobean Road, Port Charlotte. www.eventbrite.com or 239-672-3335

THE SUNCOAST STATESMEN'S 'HARMONY

SHOWCASE: 4 p.m. March 30. Burnt Store Presbyterian Church, 11330 Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda. <https://suncoaststatesmen.com>

NORTH PORT SYMPHONY: 'Hooked On Classics': 3 p.m. March 30. North Port Performing Arts Center, 6400 W. Price Blvd., North Port. www.northportsymphony.com

THE ALTER EAGLES: 7:30 p.m. March 31. Visani, 2400 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte. 941-629-9191 or www.visani.net

APRIL

FLASHLIGHT EGG HUNT: 8 p.m. April 11. Bring your flashlight and a basket to search for thousands of glow-in-the-dark eggs. Egg hunts begin at 8:15 p.m. The egg hunt designed for ages 7-12. City Center Front Green, 4970 City Hall Blvd. www.northportfl.gov/Event-Directory/Egg-Hunts

EGGNORMOUS EGG HUNT: April 12. Bring your own basket. Event opens at 9:45 a.m. Egg hunts begin at 10 a.m. Egg hunt designed for ages 3-9. For safety, egg hunters will be divided into four groups: adaptive, ages 3-4, ages 5-6 and ages 7-9. Additional activities include bounce houses, face painting and balloon twisting. City Center Front Green, 4970 City Hall Blvd. www.northportfl.gov/Event-Directory/Egg-Hunts

EGGSTRAVAGANZA: 10 a.m.-noon April 19 at Centennial Park, 200 W Venice Ave., Venice. Meet the Easter Bunny and hunt for Easter eggs by the gazebo. This event is for children ages 12 and under. Must be accompanied by an adult. www.visitvenicefl.org

PEOPLE FOR TREES' 27TH ANNUAL TREE FAIR: Hosted by People for Trees, a nonprofit native tree advocacy group since 1997. Native trees that will be available include sweetgum, Florida Elm, Dahoon Holly, Southern Red Cedar, Red Maple, Longleaf Pine, Slash Pine, Sugarberry. 3 or 7-gallon containers, \$15/\$30. "Ask an Arborist" booth, The City of North Port Natural Resources Division team, Florida Master Gardeners, vendors, food trucks, music, kids' activities. City Center Green, 4970 City Hall Blvd., North Port. 941-468-2486 or www.peoplefortrees.com.

~ Continued on page 20



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COMMUNITY Events

THE DISTRICT TRIBUTE: 7:30 p.m. April 1. Visani, 2400 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte. 941-629-9191 or www.visani.net

YAYA DIAMOND & THE DREAM CHASERS: 7 p.m. April 2. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Venice Art Center, 390 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice. 941-485-7136 or <https://veniceartcenter.com>

TEXAS TWISTER: Tribute to ZZ Top: 7 p.m. April 2. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

PUNTA GORDA HIBISCUS FESTIVAL: May 2-4. From 6-10 p.m. May 2 there will be a concert, dancing and food and beverage. and dancing. The festival opens at 9 a.m. May 3 with hibiscus, exotics, trees, organics etc. and more for sale as well as crafts and other types of goods. The Lil' Miss Hibiscus Pageant begins at 9 a.m. Music will continue on two stages from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. On May 4, the festival opens at 9 a.m. with music, food and plants until 3 p.m. Gilchrist Park, 400 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda. thehibiscusfestival.com

VENICE MUSICALE: SUNCOAST DUO PIANISTS: 3 p.m. April 4-5. William H. Jervy, Jr., Venice Library, 300 Nokomis Ave., Venice. VeniceMusical.org

'ALICE IN WONDERLAND': April 4-27. Alice's rabbit-hole adventures into a fantasy world of unusual creatures and riddles. Venice Theatre, Raymond Center 140 Tampa Ave. W., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

YOUNG GUNS: 7 p.m. April 5. Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice. www.scgov.net/vcc

FOREVER ABBA: 7 p.m. April 9. Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice. <https://sunevents.com>

'SEX PLEASE, WE'RE SIXTY: THE MUSICAL': April 10-27. Mrs. Stancliffe's Rose Cottage Bed & Breakfast has been successful for many years. Her neighbor, "Bud," believes they come to spend time with him in romantic liaisons. Reluctantly, Mrs. Stancliffe accepts the fact that "Bud the

Stud" is, in fact, good for business. Charlotte Players, 1182 Market Circle, Port Charlotte. 941-255-1022 or www.charlotteplayers.org

NEVER STOP BELIEVIN': TRIBUTE TO JOURNEY: 3 p.m. 7 p.m. April 11. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

'THE LEARNED LADIES': April 11-May 4. Moliere's witty classical verse comedy skewers the haughty pretensions of a women's self-educating salon amid love triangles that scandalize the household. Venice Theatre, Pinkerton Theatre, 140 Tampa Ave. W., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

VENICE SHARKS TOOTH FESTIVAL: April 12-13. Live music, food trucks, educational speakers, merchandise and fossil vendors, kids corner, and more. Hosted by Venice MainStreet. Centennial Park, 200 W. Venice Ave., Venice. www.visitvenicefl.org/event/2025-venice-sharks-tooth-festival

ABSOLUTE QUEEN: 7 p.m. April 12. Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice. <https://sunevents.com>

THE CHARLOTTE CHORALE: 'AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 MINUTES': 4 p.m. April 12. Peace River Baptist Church, 478 Berry St., Punta Gorda. 941-204-0033 or www.charlottechorale.com

'EMBRACING OUR DIFFERENCES': Through April 13. Annual outdoor display of 50 billboard-sized works of art and accompanying quotes. Bayfront Park, 5 Bayfront Drive, Sarasota. www.embracingourdifferences.org

ALTER EAGLES: 7:30 p.m. April 14. Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Ave., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

EIRINN ABU AND HIS MIAMI SOUND MACHINE: 7 p.m. April 16. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. <https://veniceperformingartscenter.com>

~ Continued on page 22

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COMMUNITY Events

SAILOR CIRCUS RED TROUPE 'SOUTH OF THE BORDER': April 17-19. The Sailor Circus Academy's most experienced youth performers present an end-of-year spectacle that pays homage to its senior students. Featured acts include trampoline wall, acrobatic roller skating, bicycle for five and clowning as well as aerial acts such as silks, hammock, cloudswing, duo straps, web and the flying trapeze. Sailor Circus Arena, 2075 Bahia Vista St., Sarasota. 941-355-9805 or CircusArts.org

QUEEN NATION: 7 p.m. April 19. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. <https://veniceperformingartscenter.com>

SIMPLY CLAPTON: 7:30 p.m. April 21. Venice Performing Arts Center at Venice High School, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

THE VENICE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA WITH KEY CHORALE: 'Cosmic Worlds': April 25-26. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., building 5, Venice. 941-207-8822 or www.thevenicesymphony.org



FILE PHOTO

The Arcadia All-Florida Championship Rodeo draws some of the top rodeo talent in the country in October. arcadiarodeo.com.

'MASTERWORKS OF THE PIANO: An Evening with Isaac James': 7 p.m. April 26. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

NORTH PORT CONCERT BAND: 'We Love Our Golden Oldies': 3 p.m. April 27. North Port Performing Arts Center, 6400 W. Price Blvd., North Port. northportconcertband.com

THE VENICE CHORALE BLACK & BLUE: 'A Journey Along the Danub': 7 p.m. April 27. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. <https://veniceperformingartscenter.com>

VENICE CONCERT BAND: 'CENTER STAGE': 7 p.m. April 28. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. 941-218-3779 or <https://veniceconcertband.com>

VENICE MUSICALE'S SCHOLARSHIP CONCERT: 6 p.m. April 29. St. Mark's Church, 508 Riviera St., Venice. VeniceMusicale.org

ZIMSCULPT: Feb. 8-April 20. Showcasing stunning hand-carved sculptures from Zimbabwe. Peace River Botanical & Sculpture Gardens, 5827 Riverside Drive, Punta Gorda. 941-621-8299 or <https://peacrivergardens.org>

MAY

THE SYMPHONIC WINDS OF CHARLOTTE: 'MUSIC: THE LANGUAGE OF MANKIND: 7:30 p.m. May 2. Charlotte Performing Arts Center, 701 Carmalita St., Punta Gorda. www.symphonicwindssc.com

SEPARATE WAYS: Journey Tribute Band: 7 p.m. May 3. Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. <https://veniceperformingartscenter.com>

LET'S HANG ON: 7:30 p.m. May 4. Ten seasoned entertainers preserve the music and iconic style of Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons. Venice Performing Arts Center at Venice High School, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

~ Continued on page 24

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COMMUNITY Events

'NANA DOES VEGAS': May 15-25. Nana has taken a gamble and moved to Las Vegas, where she and her sidekick Vera are working as seamstresses for a show. What could go wrong? Everything. Charlotte Players, 1182 Market Circle, Port Charlotte. 941-255-1022 or www.charlotteplayers.org

CAN'T GET NEXT TO YOU: A TRIBUTE TO THE TEMPTATIONS: 7:30 p.m. May 18. Venice Performing Arts Center at Venice High School, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

GULFSHORE OPERA: 'Journey through the Americas': 4 p.m. May 18. Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum, 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-205-8545 or <https://gulftheater.org>

SHARON OWENS: Tribute to Barbra: 7:30 p.m. May 19. Venice Performing Arts Center at Venice High School, 1 Indian Ave., Venice. 941-488-1115 or VeniceTheatre.org

JUNE

SUMMER CIRCUS SPECTACULAR: June 14-Aug. 17. The annual collaboration of the Circus Arts Conservatory and The Ringling. Historic Asolo Theater at The Ringling, 5401 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota. 941-360-7399, <https://circusarts.org> or Ringling.org.

JULY

INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION AT FISHERMEN'S VILLAGE: Family-friendly activities, live music, vendor displays, dining, shopping and more. 1200 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda. 800-639-0020 or [www.fishermensvillage.com](http://fishermensvillage.com).

FIREWORKS TO LIGHT UP OVER COOLTODAY PARK: On the front event lawn of the stadium will be a Kids Fun Zone which will include a variety of activities such as bounce houses, lawn games, music and more. In addition to the stadium concessions inside the ballpark and the opportunity for children to run the diamond, there will also be a variety of vendors and community organizations with booths as well as



FILE PHOTO
The Lighted Boat Parade, officially known as The Saturday Night Before Christmas Eve Boat Parade, is held on the Saturday before Christmas Eve in Punta Gorda Isles.

live music and fireworks. CityofNorthPort.com/FreedomFestival.

VIEW FIREWORKS FROM AREA BEACHES:

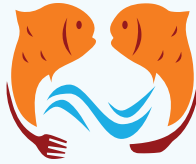
Fireworks shot from the South Jetty. The show will last around 30 minutes and can be viewed on area beaches from Caspersen to Nokomis, as well as other locations around Venice. venicegov.com.

'LIGHT UP LEMON BAY': The show starts just after dark and will be launched from Blind Pass Beach Park on Manasota Key, Englewood. lbsrfoundation.com.

AUGUST

PATTI SMITH: 'A BOOK OF DAYS': Through Aug. 31. The exhibition features a selection of photographs taken by the famed poet and musician that offers an intimate view of her life on and off the road. Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Historic Spanish Point Campus, 401 N. Tamiami Trail, Osprey. selby.org

HERMITAGE GREENFIELD PRIZE EXHIBITION: 'Currents of Resistance': April 5-Aug. 10. Sandy Rodriguez is using hand processed pigments derived from earth, plants, and insects, sourced from specimens collected during her fieldwork and residency at the Hermitage for her watercolors. This Hermitage Greenfield Prize commission is a further exploration of a series of exhibitions which maps the ongoing cycles of violence on communities of color by blending historical and recent events. The Ringling Museum of Art, 5401 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota. <https://hermitageartistretreat.org>



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Appetizers

Hush Puppies (8)	\$6.50
Crab & Seafood Cake	\$9.50
Clam Strips(4oz)	\$8.00
Breaded Onion Rings	\$7.50
Breaded Mushrooms.	\$7.50
Corn Nuggets.	\$7.50
Sweet Potato Fries with Cinnamon Butter	\$8.00
Fried Shrimp(6)	\$9.50
Coconut Shrimp(6)	\$11.50
Calamari	\$13.00

Salads

Dressings: Italian, ranch, blue cheese, 1,000 island, ceaser, honey mustard, or balsamic vinaigrette.

Side Salad	\$4.00
Garden Salad	\$7.50
Chicken (fried or grilled)	\$14.00
Shrimp (6)	\$14.00
Fried Basa Fingers (5)	\$15.00
Basa (blackened, fried or sautéed).	\$17.00
Haddock (grilled)	\$20.00
Sandwiches	
Served with lettuce, tomato, seasoned french fries & homemade coleslaw	
Black Angus Burger	\$14.50
with lettuce, tomato, bacon and cheese	
Fried Haddock	\$16.50
Chicken (fried or grilled)	\$14.00
Fried Atlantic Pollock	\$15.00
Crab & Seafood Cake Sandwich	\$15.50
Shrimp Po Boy	\$14.50
Basa (blackened, fried or sautéed)	\$17.50

Soups

New England Clam Chowder or Creamy Lobster Bisque	Cup \$6.50 / Bowl \$7.50
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Combs

Served with french fries and homemade coleslaw. Substitute fried shrimp for coconut shrimp + \$3.00

#1 Fish Fillet (2) & Shrimp (5)	\$20.50
#2 Fish Fillet (2) & Crab & Seafood Cake (1)	\$20.50
#3 Fish Fillet (2) & Basa Fingers (4)	\$20.00
#4 Fish Fillet (2) & Scallops (4)	\$26.50
#5 Fish Fillet (2) & ClamStrips (4oz)	\$20.00
#6 Fish Fillet (2) & Oysters (4oz)	\$26.00
#7 Shrimp (5) & Oyster (4oz)	\$25.50
#8 Basa Fingers (4) & Shrimp (5)	\$20.00
#9 Shrimp (5) & Crab & Seafood Cake (1)	\$20.00
#10 Shrimp (5) & Scallops(4)	\$26.00
#11 Basa Fingers (4) & Scallops (4)	\$26.00
#12 Coconut Shrimp (5) & Fried Shrimp (5)	\$22.00
#13 Basa Fingers & Crab & Seafood Cake (1)	\$20.00
#14 Shrimp (5) & ClamStrips (4oz)	\$20.00
#15 Fish Fillet (2) & Chicken Tenders (2)	\$20.50
#16 Shrimp (5) & Chicken Tenders (2)	\$20.50
#17 Basa Fingers (4) & Oysters (4oz)	\$25.50
#18 Scallops (4) & Oysters (4oz)	\$28.00

Seafood

Served with french fries and homemade coleslaw.

Clam Strips	(4oz) \$ 12.00	(8oz) \$16.50
Chicken Tenders	(3) \$15.00	(4) \$17.50
Haddock	(1) \$15.00	(2) \$20.50

Cod	(1) \$15.00	(2) \$20.50
Fish & Chips	(2) \$16.00	(3) \$20.50
Crab & Seafood Cakes	(1) \$15.00.	(2) \$19.00
Fried Shrimp	(6) \$14.00	(10) \$19.00
Basa Fingers	(5) \$14.00	(8) \$19.00
Coconut Shrimp	(6) \$16.00	(10) \$21.50
Fried Oysters	(4oz) \$ 22.00	(8oz) \$26.50
Sea Scallops	(5) \$23.00	(8) \$28.00
Whole Belly Clams	(4oz) \$23.50	(8oz) \$34.00
Add 2.5 oz Whole Belly		\$12.50

Prices on menu subject to changes based on market price.

Calamari Plate

Served with french fries and homemade coleslaw \$18.00

Pick Any 3

Your choice of any 3 of the following items served with french fries and homemade coleslaw \$24.00

- (1) Alaskan Pollock Filet
- (3) Basa Fingers
- (4oz) ClamStrips
- (4) Fried Shrimp
- (1) Haddock
- (2) Chicken Tenders
- (1) Crab & Seafood Cake
- (4) Coconut Shrimp + \$3.00

Fresh Fish Finger Dinner

(2) Grouper or snapper Fingers and (3) Shrimp with french fries and homemade coleslaw \$19.00

Basa Fish Dinner

A fillet served any way you like it - fried, blackened or sautéed with french fries and homemade coleslaw \$18.00

Ultimate Seafood Platter

Includes Sea Scallops (2), Fried Shrimp, (4) Basa Fingers (4), Clam Strips (4oz), Fish Fillet (1) and Crab & Seafood Cake (1), french fries and homemade coleslaw \$34.50

Haddock Combo

A Haddock served with french fries, homemade coleslaw and choice of one of the following:

- Basa Fingers (3), Crab & Seafood Cake (1) or Fried Shrimp (5) \$20.00
- Coconut Shrimp (5) \$22.50
- Oysters (4oz) \$25.00
- Scallops (4) \$26.00
- Clam Strips \$19.50
- Whole Belly Clams (4oz) \$28.50

Side Upgrades

Veggies	\$2.00
Side Salad	\$2.00
Sweet Potato Fries	\$2.00
Onion Rings	\$2.00
Onion Pedals	\$2.00
Fried Okra	\$2.00
Breaded Mushrooms	\$2.00
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Saffron Rice with Vegetables	\$2.00

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SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR LIVE STREAM LINK

TRADITIONAL SERVICE 8:30AM
CONTEMPORARY SERVICE 10:30AM

...reaching up, nurturing faith, loving neighbors

adno=3946648-1



CENTERPOINTE
Christian Church

Helping people move closer to God and each other with Jesus Christ as the center.

Sunday Services: 8:30am|10am|11:30am
Livestream at 10am
Children's Ministry at 10am & 11:30am
Nursery at all services

1100 Center Rd Venice, FL 34292 | 941-408-8088
office@centerpointe.cc | www.centerpointe.cc

adno=39591166-0

adno=3936596-1

RELIGIOUS SERVICES



The Congregational Church

A Loving, Bible Teaching Fellowship Where all we have is all you need! Jesus!
 730 East Laurel Rd. Nokomis, Fl.
 Sunday Worship 10am and
 Children's Ministry with Ms. Katie
 Wed. Bible Study 7pm
 Men's & Women's Ministries
 Call K.C. McCay 941-586-4338

adno=3946666-1



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PORT CHARLOTTE

SUNDAY WORSHIP: 9 A.M.
 COFFEE FELLOWSHIP: 8 A.M.
 SUNDAY SCHOOL 8 A.M

Pastor Silvio Estevez
 2230 Hariet Street
 Between Midway & Gibraltar
 (Next to Rock Calvary Chapel)
 941-625-5045
www.fpcpc.com ▪ [facebook/1stpc](https://facebook.com/1stpc)
 Everyone Welcome!

adno=3946657-1



790 Tamiami Trl. S., Venice
 On the Island!
www.emmanuel-elca.org
 941-488-4942

Saturday
 Traditional Worship @ 5pm
Sunday
 Traditional Worship @ 8:30am
 Children's Church @ 9:30am
 FaithBridge Family Worship @ 10:15am

adno=3946667-1



Faith
 Lutheran Church
 of Rotonda West
www.alivingfaith.org
 Listening • Caring • Serving

9:30am Service Inside the Sanctuary.

Sunday Worship 9:30 am
 Adult Sunday School 10:30 am
 Worship 8:30 am & 10:30 am
 January through April
 Adult Sunday School 9:30 am (January - April)
 Tuesday Morning women and men's service teams
 Bible Study Wednesday
 Call for times or more information.
 Live streaming at: alivingfaith.org
 The Rev. Dr. Brian Armen, Pastor: 941-697-3313

adno=3946701-1



LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS (LCMS)

2300 Luther Road
 Port Charlotte (Deep Creek) FL 33983
 941-627-6060

Welcoming All

Winter Sunday Worship
 7:30, 9:00, 10:30
 Summer Sunday Worship
 7:30 and 10:30
 Streaming & Info at www.lccross.org

adno=3946658-1

adno=3936599-1

RELIGIOUS SERVICES



New Life Church - Sunday Worship
 8 am Praise in the Park,
 Gilchrist Park Pavillion
 September - June (Weather Permitting)
 9:15 am Traditional, Sanctuary
 10:45 am Contemporary, Life Center
 507 West Marion Ave., Punta Gorda, FL 33950
 (941) 639-3842
www.newlifeforall.church

adno=3946659-1



South Venice Baptist Church
 Sunday Morning Worship: 10:45am
 Sunday Evening Bible Study: 6pm
 Men's Iron Sharpeners Bible Study Mon: 7pm
 Prayer meeting & Bible study Wed: 6pm

Streaming live on Facebook.com
Visit our website: SVBaptist.org

To learn more about us and our services
 3167 Englewood Rd., Venice, FL • 941-493-0022

adno=3946703-1



PORT CHARLOTTE
 Global Methodist Church

SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES

8:00AM & 11:00AM 9:30AM
 TRADITIONAL CONTEMPORARY

21075 QUESADA AVENUE
 PORT CHARLOTTE, FL 33952

portcharlottechurch.com | 941-625-4356

adno=3946660-1



TRINITY GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

23084 Seneca Ave.
 Charlotte Harbor, FL 33980
 941-625-3372
 Pastor Clarice Setser

Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday Food & Bag Lunch
 9:00 am to 11:00 am

Come Join us for Sunday Worship
trinitycharlotteharborgmc.org

adno=3936982-1

Mass Times:

Sunday Vigil (Saturday):

After Holy Saturday thru December 4:00pm
 January to Saturday before Easter 3:00pm and 4:30pm
 Sunday: After Easter Sunday thru
 December 8:00am, 10:00am

January thru Easter Sunday 7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am
 Weekday Masses: Monday thru Friday 8:15am
 Pastor: Father Cory Mayer



www.sfoachurch.com
 5265 Placida Rd.,
 Grove City
 941-697-4899

172099463=oupp

Unitarian Universalist

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all Faiths to
SouthWest Florida
 and to our

Sunday Service

10:30 AM

1532 Forrest Nelson
 Port Charlotte, Florida

(941) 627-4303

www.uufcc.org

adno=3915792-1

IMPORTANT Phone Numbers



Now that you're here, you need to take care of a few things.

These are the important addresses, phone numbers and websites you'll need to update your driver's license, register your vehicle, register to vote, take care of your utilities, sign your children up for school and find other necessary services.

TAXES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Charlotte County Tax Collector Vickie L. Potts
taxcollector.charlottecountyfl.gov

Driver's license services can be performed at all Tax Collector locations. Road tests are performed at the Punta Gorda and Englewood locations by appointment only.

Locations:

PUNTA GORDA 410 Taylor St.
941-743-1350

PORT CHARLOTTE 21229 Olean Blvd.
941-743-1350

MURDOCK CHARLOTTE

Administration Building 18500 Murdock Circle 941-743-1350

ENGLEWOOD 6868 San Casa Drive 941-681-3710

SARASOTA COUNTY

Sarasota Tax Collector Barbara Ford-Coates
www.sarasotataxcollector.com

Note: Driver's license road tests are available only at the Mid-County Office.

Locations:

DOWNTOWN SARASOTA
Terrace Building 101 S. Washington Blvd. (U.S. 301)

941-861-8300

MID-COUNTY 6100 Sawyer Loop Road Sarasota 941-861-8300

VENICE Robert L. Anderson Administration Center 4000 S. Tamiami Trail 941-861-8300

NORTH PORT North Port City Hall 4970 City Hall Blvd. 941-861-8300

DESOTO COUNTY

Desoto County Tax Collector Debra L. Burtcher
www.desotocountytaxcollector.com

ARCADIA 201 E. Oak St. Suite 101 863-993-4865 or 863-993-4793



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

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WWW.HABITATSOUTHSARASOTA.ORG/VOLUNTEER

941-493-6606

ELECTION OFFICES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Supervisor of Elections
Leah Valenti
www.charlottevotes.com

Election offices:

MAIN OFFICE Charlotte County Historic
Courthouse 226 Taylor St., Punta Gorda 941-
833-5400

**CHARLOTTE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION
BUILDING** 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte
941-743-1387

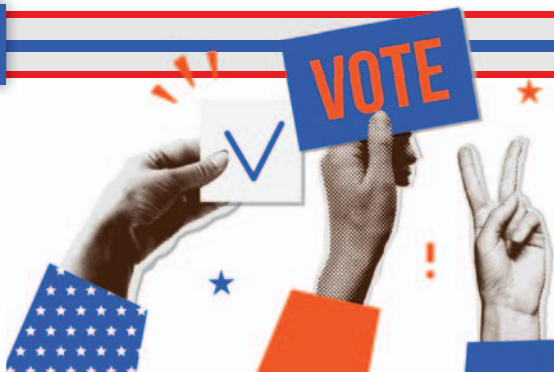
ENGLEWOOD ANNEK 6868 San Casa Drive,
Englewood 941-681-3717

SARASOTA COUNTY

Supervisor of Elections Ron Turner www.
sarasotavotes.com

Election offices:

SARASOTA Terrace Building 101 S. Washington
Blvd., 941-861-8600



VENICE

Robert L. Anderson Administration Building
4000 Tamiami Trail S., Room 114 941-861-3760

NORTH PORT

Biscayne Plaza 13640 Tamiami Trail, North Port
941-423-9540

DESOTO COUNTY

ARCADIA

Supervisor of Elections
Mark F. Nelgley
www.votedesoto.com 201 E Oak St.,
#104 863- 993-4871

UTILITIES



CHARLOTTE COUNTY

ELECTRICITY

Florida Power and Light (FPL)
866-263-9185
FPL.com

GARBAGE PICKUP

Waste Management
941-575-5050
www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us

WATER

Charlotte County Utilities
941-764-4300
www.charlottecountyfl.gov
Englewood Water District
941-474-3217
englewoodwater.com
Punta Gorda 941-575-5088
www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us

INTERNET/PHONE/TV

Comcast 800-266-2278
www.xfinity.com
Frontier 877-980-6788
frontier.com
CenturyLink 855-234-1903
www.centurylink.com

DESOTO COUNTY

**Desoto County Utilities
Department** 2170 N.E. Roan St,
Arcadia 863 491-7500

ELECTRICITY

Florida Power and Light (FPL)
866-263-9185 FPL.com

GARBAGE PICKUP

Womack Sanitation Inc.
863-494-1580
www.womacksanitation.com

WATER

Arcadia Water Department
863-494-3678 arcadia-fl.gov
**Desoto County Utilities
Department** 863 491-7500
desotobocc.com

INTERNET/PHONE/TV

Comcast 800-266-2278
www.xfinity.com
Frontier 877-980-6788
frontier.com

SARASOTA COUNTY

ELECTRICITY

Florida Power and Light (FPL)
866-263-9185 FPL.com

GARBAGE PICKUP

Waste Management
941-861-5000 www.scgov.net
North Port 941-240-8050
www.cityofnorthport.com

WATER

Sarasota County Utilities
941-861-6790 www.scgov.net
Englewood Water District
941-474-3217
englewoodwater.com
North Port Utilities
941-426-9500
www.cityofnorthport.com

INTERNET/PHONE/TV

Comcast 800-266-2278
www.xfinity.com
Frontier 877-980-6788
frontier.com



**3519 Drance St, Port Charlotte, FL,
United States, Florida
(941) 625-6720
Info@awlshelter.org
awlshelter.org**

LIBRARIES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

PORT CHARLOTTE LIBRARY

2280 Aaron St. Port Charlotte
941-764-5562

PUNTA GORDA LIBRARY

401 Shreve St. Punta Gorda
941-833-5460

ENGLEWOOD CHARLOTTE LIBRARY

3450 N. Access Road Englewood
941-681-3736

DESOTO COUNTY

DESOTO COUNTY LIBRARY

125 N. Hillsborough Ave. Arcadia
863-993-4851

SARASOTA COUNTY

ELSIE QUIRK LIBRARY

100 W. Dearborn St. Englewood
941-861-1200

NORTH PORT LIBRARY

13800 Tamiami Trail North Port
941-861-1300

SHANNON STAUB LIBRARY

4675 Career Lane North Port
941-861-1740

FRANCES T. BOURNE JACARANDA LIBRARY

4143 Woodmere Park Blvd. Venice
941-861-1260

VENICE LIBRARY

at the Hamilton Building
260 Nokomis Ave. N. Venice
941-861-1330



POST OFFICES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

PORT CHARLOTTE

3740 Tamiami Trail 941-625-2397 800-275-8777

ANNEK

18100 Paulson Drive 941-625-2397

MURDOCK

19190 Cochran Blvd. 941-625-2397

PUNTA GORDA

130 E. Marion Ave. 941-639-7016

DESOTO COUNTY

ARCADIA

109 N. Polk Ave. 863-491-8372

SARASOTA COUNTY

NORTH PORT

13611 Tamiami Trail 941-426-0940

VENICE

350 W. Venice Ave. 941-483-4195

ANNEK

314 Seaboard Ave. 941-485-0995



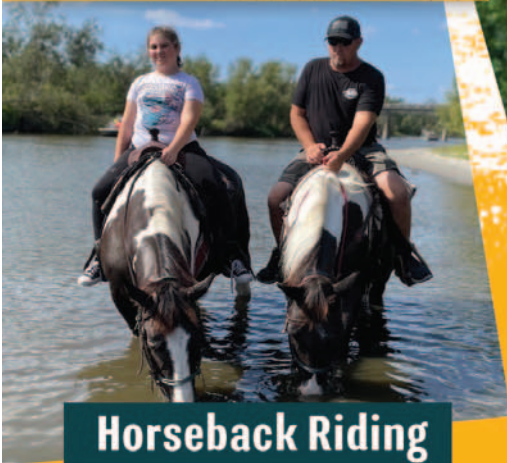
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adno-5301079-1

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF DESOTO COUNTY

16 S. Volusia Ave., Arcadia
863-494-4033 www.desotochamberfl.com

PUNTA GORDA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

252 941-639-3720 puntagordachamber.com

CHARLOTTE COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Port Charlotte Office, 2702 Tamiami Trail,
Port Charlotte
941-627-2222 charlottecountychamber.org

CHARLOTTE COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Punta Gorda Office 311 W. Retta Esplanade,
Punta Gorda
941-639-2222 charlottecountychamber.org



ENGLEWOOD FLORIDA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

601 S. Indiana Ave., Englewood
941-474-5511 www.inglewoodchamber.com

VENICE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

597 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice
941-488-2236 venicechamber.com

NORTH PORT AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1337 Sumter Blvd., North Port
941-564-3040 www.northportareachamber.com

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

DEEP CREEK ELEMENTARY

26900 HarborView Road, Port Charlotte
941-255-7535 yourcharlotteschools.net/dce

EAST ELEMENTARY

27050 S. Fairway Drive
Punta Gorda 941-575-5475
yourcharlotteschools.net/EES

KINGSWAY ELEMENTARY

23300 Quasar Blvd., Port
Charlotte 941-255-7590
yourcharlotteschools.net/kes

LIBERTY ELEMENTARY

70 Atwater St., Port Charlotte
941-255-7515
yourcharlotte.schools.net

MEADOW PARK ELEMENTARY

750 Essex Ave., Port Charlotte
941-255-7470
yourcharlotte.schools.net/mpc

MYAKKA RIVER ELEMENTARY

12650 Willmington Blvd.
Port Charlotte 941-697-7111
yourcharlotte.schools.net/MRE

NEIL ARMSTRONG ELEMENTARY

22100 Breezeswept Ave., Port

Charlotte 941-255-7450
yourcharlotte.schools.net/nae

PEACE RIVER ELEMENTARY

4070 Beaver Lane, Port Charlotte 941-255-7622
yourcharlotteschools.net/pre

SALLIE JONES ELEMENTARY

1230 Narranja St., Punta
Gorda 941-575-5440
yourcharlotteschools.net/sj

VINELAND ELEMENTARY

467 Boundary Blvd.,
Rotonda West 941-697-6600
yourcharlotteschools.net/ves

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

L.A. RINGER MIDDLE

245 Cougar Way, Rotonda West,
941-697-5800
yourcharlotte.schools.net/lam

MURDOCK MIDDLE

17325 Mariner Way, Port
Charlotte 941-255-7525
yourcharlotteschools.net/mms

PORT CHARLOTTE MIDDLE

23000 Midway Blvd., Port
Charlotte 941-255-7460
yourcharlotteschools.net/pcm



FILE PHOTO

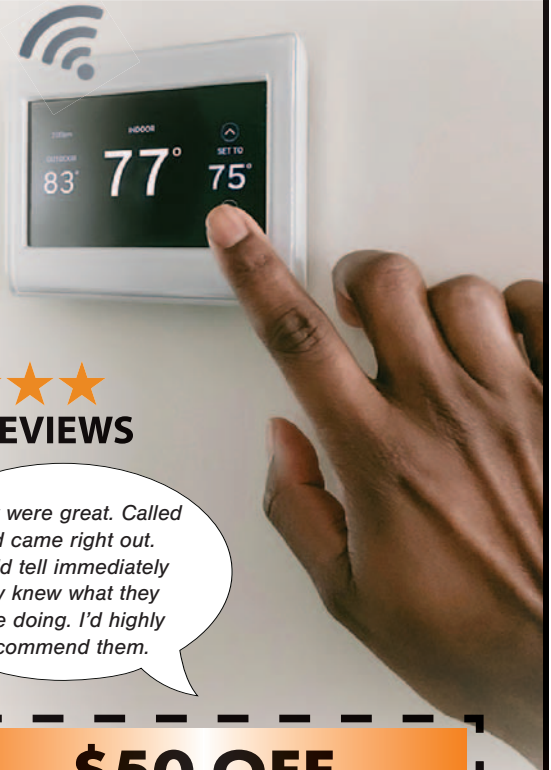
Charlotte High School track-and-field star Sahia Johnson, 18, shows her diploma case after crossing the stage at the Charlotte Sports Park in 2024.

~ Continued on page 36



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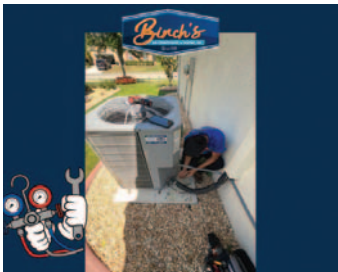
5-STAR REVIEWS

-Birch's installed a specialized unit for me. I can't say enough about working with someone in the A/C business I can now trust.

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PUNTA GORDA MIDDLE

1001 Education Ave., Punta Gorda, 941-575-5485
yourcharlotteschools.net/PGM

SKY ACADEMY OF ENGLEWOOD

881 S. River Road, Englewood ,941-999-4775
www.skyatthey.com/englewood

HIGH SCHOOLS

ACADEMY AT VO-TECH

18300 Cochran Blvd., Port Charlotte
941-255-7545, yourcharlotteschools.net/acad

CHARLOTTE HIGH

1250 Cooper St., Punta Gorda, 941-575-5450
chs.yourcharlotteschools.net

FLORIDA SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGIATE HIGH SCHOOL

Building K, 26300 Airport Road, Punta Gorda
941-637-5673, fsw.edu/wp/cchs

LEMON BAY HIGH SCHOOL

2201 Placida Road, Englewood, 941-474-7702
lemonbayhigh.com

PORT CHARLOTTE HIGH SCHOOL

18200 Cochran Blvd., Port Charlotte
941-255-7485, yourcharlotteschools.net/pchs

SARASOTA COUNTY

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

ATWATER ELEMENTARY

701 Huntsville Ave., North Port, 941-257-2317
sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/atwater

CRANBERRY ELEMENTARY

2775 Shalimar Terrace, North Port, 941-480-3400
sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/cranberry

COLLEGE PREPARATORY ACADEMY

11611 Mezzo Drive, Wellen Park, 941-357-4783
www.wellenparkprep.org

ENGLEWOOD ELEMENTARY

150 N. McCall Road, Englewood, 941-474-3247
sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/englewood

GARDEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

700 Center Road, Venice, 941- 486-2110
www.sarasotacountyschools.net/garden

GLENALLEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

7050 Glenallen Blvd., North Port, 941-426-9517
sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/glenallen

LAMARQUE ELEMENTARY

3415 Lamarque Ave. ,North Port, 941-426-6371
sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/lamarque

~ Continued on page 38

INTERNAL MEDICINE PRIMARY CARE

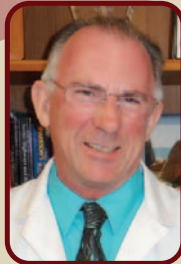
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WALLY'S BBQ

VOTED BEST
BBQ & RIBS



MON - SUN. 11AM - 9PM

APPETIZERS

SOUTHERN SHRIMP

Fried shrima tossed with garlic butter red thetry and banana peers,

FRIED GREEN TOMATO

QUESADILLAS

Pulled pork, chicken & beef brisket

BBQ NACHOS

Fresh nacho chips topped with pulled pork, cheddar cheese, BBQ sauce and jalapeños

LOADED NACHOS

Layers of nacho chips with pulled pork topped with pulled pork chili, cheese and jalapeños

RIB TIPS

OKIE STRINGS

FRIED PICKLES

BONELESS WINGS (10PCS)

SMOKED SPICY WINGS

10 PCS | 20 PCS | 30 PCS

BOOM BOOM SHRIMP

Fried shrimp tossed in buttery sriacha sauce over a bed of lettuce

LOADED BAKED POTATO

A pound and a half of baked potato loaded with butter, sour cream, cheddar jack cheese, pulled pork, and chives

MEAT OVER MAC

Your choice of pulled pork, pulled chicken, brisket (\$2 extra), or bacon (\$2 extra) over mac and cheese

SPECIALTY PLATTERS

Served with your choice of 2 sides, our cornbread, and Okie toast
Add a Caesar or house salad | Add 2 St Louis ribs to any meal

ST. LOUIS SPARE RIBS

1/2 SLAB | FULL SLAB

BABY BACK RIBS

1/2 RACK | FULL RACK

RIBS & 1 MEAT PLATTER

ST. LOUIS or 1/2 BABY BACK
1 mouthwatering meat with your choice of St. Louis ribs (1/3 rack) or 1/2 baby back ribs. **Substitute full baby back ribs**

RIBS & 2 MEAT PLATTER

ST. LOUIS or 1/2 BABY BACK
2 mouthwatering meats with your choice of St. Louis ribs (1/3 rack) or 1/2 baby back ribs. **Substitute full baby back ribs**

SMOKED CHICKEN PLATTER

1/4 CHICKEN | 1/2 CHICKEN
WHITE MEAT

A LA CARTE

BRISKET

PULLED PORK

POLISH SAUSAGE

SMOKED TURKEY BREST

PORK BELLY

ST LOUIS RIBS

1/2 SLAB
FULL SLAB

CHICKEN SMOKED

1/2 CHICKEN
FULL CHICKEN

BABY BACK RIBS

1/2 RACK
FULL RACK

MEALS FOR 2

Add a Caesar or house salad

SAMPLE PLATTER

1/2 rack of St. Louis ribs, 1/4 chicken, pulled pork and brisket with your choice of 2 sides to share. **Substitute baby back ribs**

RIBS FOR TWO

Full rack of baby back ribs and 1/2 rack of St. Louis ribs, served with 2 sides to share. **Substitute baby back ribs**

RIBS & CHICKEN FOR TWO

Full rack of baby back ribs and 1/2 Chicken served with 2 sides to share

CHICKEN FOR TWO

1/2 smoked chicken and your choice of pulled chicken, BBQ chicken breast, or fried chicken tenders, served with 2 sides to share

WALLY'S YOUR WAY

Served with your choice of 2 sides, pick from our tender meats

1 MEAT PLATTER

2 MEAT COMBO

3 MEAT PLATTER

MEAT FOR 2

SIDE DISHES

MAC & CHEESE

HUSH PUPPIES (8PCS)

CORN NUGGETS (15 PCS)

FRIED OKRA

GREEN BEANS WITH BACON BITS

BBQ BEANS

BAKED BEANS

COLESLAW

OKIE SPUDS

SWEET POTATO FRIES

SWEET POTATO

CORN ON THE COB

TWICE BAKED POTATO

BRUNSWICK STEW, PULLED PORK

CHILI OR FRENCH ONION

CUP



SCAN TO VIEW
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Check out our full menu at www.wallysbbq.com

VENICE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

150 Miami Ave. E., Venice, 941-486-2111
www.sarasotacountyschools.net/
veniceelementary

TAYLOR RANCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2500 Taylor Ranch Trail, Venice
941-486-2000
https://www.sarasotacountyschools.net/
taylorranch

MIDDLE SCHOOL

HERON CREEK MIDDLE

6501 W. Price Blvd., North Port, 941-480-3371
sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/heroncreek

VENICE MIDDLE SCHOOL

1900 Center Road, Venice, 941-486-2100
www.sarasotacountyschools.net/venicemiddle

WOODLAND MIDDLE

2700 Panacea Blvd., North Port, 941-240-8590
sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/woodland

HIGH SCHOOLS

NORTH PORT HIGH

400 W. Price Blvd., North Port
941-423-8558, sarasotacountyschools.net/
schools/northporthigh

VENICE HIGH SCHOOL

1 Indian Ave., Venice, 941-488-6726
www.sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/
venicehigh

K-12 SCHOOL

IMAGINE SCHOOL AT NORTH PORT

(6-12) 2575 Sycamore St.
(K-5) 1000 Innovation Ave., 941-426-2050
imagineschoolatnorthport.org

2-12 SCHOOL

PINE VIEW SCHOOL

1 Python Path, Osprey, 941-486-2001
sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/pineview

DESOTO COUNTY

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

MEMORIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

851 E. Hickory St., Arcadi, 863-494-2736
mes.desotoschools.com

NOCATEE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

4846 S.W. Shores Ave., Arcadia, 863-494-0755
nes.desotoschools.com

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

WEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

304 W. Imogene St., Arcadia, 863-494-3155
wes.desotoschools.com

DESOTO MIDDLE SCHOOL

420 E. Gibson St., Arcadia, 863-494-4133
dms.desotoschools.com

DESOTO SECONDARY SCHOOL

318 N. Wilson Ave., Arcadia, 863-494-9303
dss.desotoschools.com

HIGH SCHOOL

DESOTO COUNTY HIGH

1710 E. Gibson St., Arcadia, 863-494-3434
dhs.desotoschools.com

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

FLORIDA SOUTHWESTERN STATE COLLEGE

Charlotte Campus
26300 Airport Road, Punta Gorda
941-637-5629, www.fsw.edu

SARASOTA COUNTY

EVERGLADES UNIVERSITY

6001 Lake Osprey Drive, #110, Sarasota
941-907-2262, evergladesuniversity.edu

KEISER UNIVERSITY

6151 Lake Osprey Drive, Sarasota
941-907-3900
www.keiseruniversity.edu/sarasota

NEW COLLEGE OF FLORIDA

5800 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota, 941-487-5000
www.ncf.edu

RINGLING COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

2700 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, 941-351-
5100 www.ringling.edu

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www.suncoast.edu

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941-359-4200, usfsm.edu

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239-590-1000, www.fgcu.edu

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www.charlottecountyfl.gov

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www.flypgd.com

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srq-airport.com

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863-494-5965
<https://friendshipcenters.org/location/desoto-friendship-center>

PUNTA GORDA

Friendship Centers

27420 Voyageur Drive
941-255-0723

Senior Helpers

25166 Marion Ave #114
941-347-8288

PORT CHARLOTTE

Charlotte County Human Services

1050 Loveland Blvd.
941-833-6500

Charlotte County Veterans Services

1050 Loveland Blvd.
941-764-5579

Granny NANNIES of Port Charlotte

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941-743-7606

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North Port Senior Center

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941-426-2204

North Port Social Services

6919 Outreach Way
941-429-3700
assistedlivinglocators.com

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941-474-4445

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HCA Fawcett Memorial Hospital
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941-629-1181
fawcethospital.com

PUNTA GORDA

ShorePoint Punta Gorda
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HCA Florida Englewood Hospital
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941-475-6571
englewoodcommhospital.com

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941-257-2800
www.smh.com

VENICE

Sarasota Memorial Hospital – Venice
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941-261-9000
www.smh.com

SARASOTA

Sarasota Memorial Hospital
1700 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota
941-917-9000
www.smh.com

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941-290-5491

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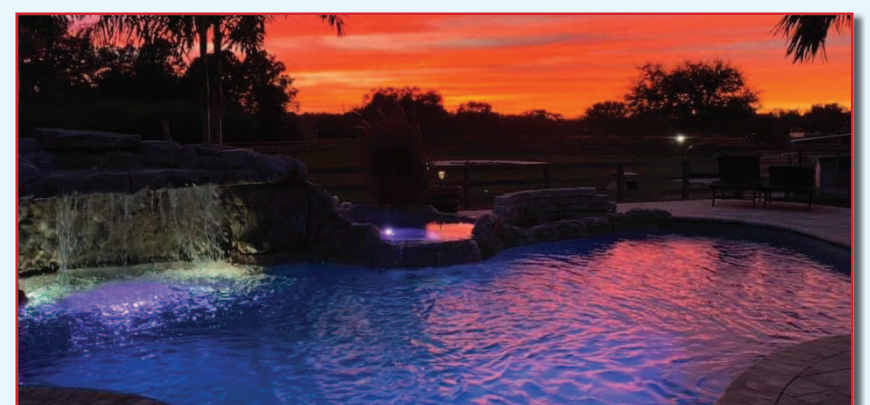


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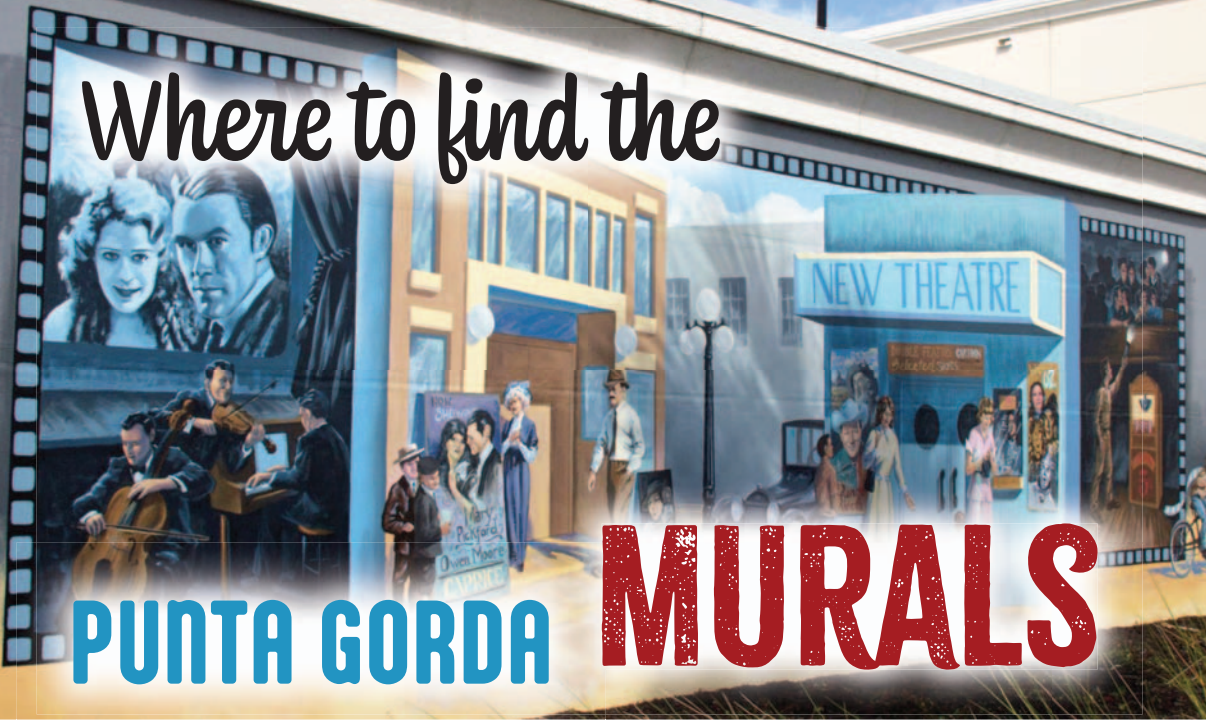


Jessica Tari and Jason Tari

Where to find the

PUNTA GORDA

MURALS



Movie Memories mural located at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center, 75 Taylor St.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY KELLY GAYLORD

HOTEL CHARLOTTE HARBOR

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Bank of America
126 E. Olympia Ave.

CATTLE DRIVE DOWN MARION AVENUE

Attorney Rooney's building
East Olympia Ave. and Wood St.

MURAL HISTORY

The murals all around town are the creations of the Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society, a nonprofit, started as part of a city-wide revitalization project. Each mural presents a slice of the area's rich history.

There are currently over 30 murals in all and can be found by using the free Walking/Biking Guides available at the Punta Gorda Chamber. Get a brief history lesson by simply scanning the QR Code sign on each mural wall.

History classes are offered throughout the year and guided tours are offered in season. Check out the website for more information.

— Punta Gorda Mural Society,
<https://puntagordamurals.org>

~ Continued on page 48

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MOVIE MEMORIES

The Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center, 75 Taylor St.

FIRST CITY COUNCIL

Punta Gorda City Hall Annex
126 Harvey St.

SCHOOL MARMS ON THE BAY

Fishermen's Village
1200 W. Retta Esplanade

THE CHURCHES OF SACRED HEART

Sacred Heart Church, 211 W. Charlotte Ave.

HARBOR LIFE, THEN AND NOW

Southbound Wall, 1601 S. Tamiami Trail

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Sallie Jones Elementary School,
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Baker Center School, 311 E. Charlotte Ave.

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Draper Professional Center
401 E. Olympia Ave.

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Punta Gorda Club YMCA,
2905 S. Tamiami Trail

EARLY DAYS OF WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL GOLF

Punta Gorda Club YMCA
2905 S. Tamiami Trail

LIFE AND TIMES OF GEORGE BROWN

Old Charlotte County Courthouse
227 Taylor St.

A HUNTERS PARADISE – PROVISIONS OF THE LAND

Punta Gorda Club YMCA
2905 S. Tamiami Trail

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Suncoast One Title & Closings,
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City of Punta Gorda Fire Dept.
1401 N. Tamiami Trail

LADIES REMEMBERED

Bayside Eye Center, 314 N. Tamiami Trail

TAILS FROM THE HARBOR

Punta Gorda Harborwalk,
under U.S. 41 Southbound Bridge

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Punta Gorda Charlotte Library
401 Shreve St.

HISTORIC PUNTA GORDA ARMY AIR FIELD

Veterans Park, 100 Nesbit St.

BOATING IN PARADISE

Punta Gorda Boat Club
802 W. Retta Esplanade

HOTEL PUNTA GORDA

Springhill Suites Punta Gorda Harborside,
hotel lobby
101 Harborside Ave.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY KELLY GAYLORD

The Tales from the Harbor, is located on a sloping concrete retaining wall beneath the southbound Gilchrist Bridge known as Harborwalk.

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AREA BEACHES

It's just a short drive from anywhere in Southwest Florida to a beautiful beach. The easiest Gulf of Mexico beaches to access are Manasota Key, which offers miles of uncluttered shoreline, and four public parks that allow very different beach-going experiences and are easy to access by car. Just a short drive to the south are the beautiful beaches of Boca Grande and Gasparilla Island State Park. If you have access to a boat, your choice of beaches increases, as you can visit Don Pedro Island State Park, Little Gasparilla Island, Cayo Costa State Park and more.

MANASOTA KEY

Englewood Beach/Chadwick Park
2100 N. Beach Road, Englewood

This large beach is Charlotte County's main park on the Gulf of Mexico. It's an easy drive over two bridges that span beautiful Lemon Bay and the Intracoastal Waterway. Englewood Beach features swimming, fishing, shelling, picnic shelters, barbecue grills, birding opportunities and wooden walkways. There are also updated playgrounds, basketball courts, beach volleyball and horseshoe pits. There's a newly refurbished shower and restroom facility and a recently paved parking lot. There is a small fee to park, and self-service parking passes sold from machines.

This popular public beach is also across North Beach Road from several great restaurants, patio bars and a fun shopping area.

STUMP PASS BEACH STATE PARK

900 Gulf Blvd., Englewood

If you like nature and a little more seclusion, Stump Pass Beach State Park is for you. In addition to swimming, nature trails, birding, shelling and fishing, this beach operated by the Florida State Park system offers winding coastal nature trails, a picnic pavilion, a canoe/kayak launch, showers and restrooms, and access to Stump Pass, the waterway that links the Gulf of Mexico with Lemon Bay. There is a small fee to use this park, and you should plan to bring your own amenities like snacks and drinks.

MANASOTA BEACH PARK

8570 Manasota Key Road, Englewood
Blind Pass Beach Park

6725 Manasota Key Road, Englewood

Sarasota County operates two beaches on Manasota Key, Manasota Beach Park to the north, and Blind Pass Beach Park, which locals call "Middle Beach," near the middle of the key. Both are easily accessible by car and offer swimming, fishing, shelling and birding opportunities with ample parking and updated restrooms and showers. Manasota Beach has its own boat dock on the Intracoastal Waterway, while Blind Pass has a canoe and kayak launch on its bayside. Blind Pass also has a fun playground for the kids.

~ Continued on page 52

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BOCA GRANDE

Gasparilla Island State Park 880 Belcher Road, Boca Grande

Beaches, boating, canoe/kayak, hiking, picnicking, swimming, snorkeling/diving and fishing.

BOCA GRANDE PUBLIC BEACHES

Third Street and other locations

There are 14 public Gulf of Mexico beaches, but they're not always easy to find. Not all have parking, and because of erosion, some offer only a beautiful view of the Gulf of Mexico. If you drive south on Gilchrist Boulevard, which turns into Gulf Boulevard, the Gulf beaches are on your right, at the end of each street. Farther south, there are 14 walking paths from Gulf Boulevard to the beach. There are also 11 bayside access points.

On the southern end of the island, Gasparilla Island State Park is on the right, and has a public parking lot, with the larger portion of the park about a quarter mile south. Both parks have swimming and fishing opportunities, and each features its own unique lighthouse.

ISLAND BEACHES

Don Pedro Island State Park

8450 Placida Road, Placida

Cayo Costa State Park

4 Nautical Miles West of Pine Island, Cayo Costa

If you have access to a boat, there are lots of additional public beach parks you can enjoy. The Florida State Park service operates Don Pedro Island State Park, which is in Placida near Englewood, and Cayo Costa State Park, which is south of Boca Grande Pass. Both offer swimming, boating, canoe/kayak, hiking, picnicking, snorkeling/diving, fishing, camping in small primitive cabins or tents.

Visit www.floridastateparks.org or call 941-964-0375 to learn more about these parks, and how to find ferry services to these beaches.

PORT CHARLOTTE

PORT CHARLOTTE BEACH

4500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte

One of the easiest beaches to reach from Port Charlotte or Punta Gorda is Port Charlotte Beach. It offers a sandy sunning area along Charlotte Harbor, plus boat ramps, basketball and tennis courts, picnic tables and a dog park. It also has a large swimming pool that offers aerobics, swimming lessons and cool open swim.

VENICE

VENICE BEACH

101 The Esplanade, Venice (at the west end of

West Venice Avenue)

The unique "sail" style pavilion at the beach is an iconic landmark along with the beach restroom building. The beach is in city limits but is maintained by Sarasota County, including its concession area. Parking is free and lifeguards are available. Camping is not allowed on the beach and fires are also prohibited.

CASPERSEN BEACH

4100 Harbor Drive, Venice

Search for sharks' teeth and hike the nature trails at Caspersen Beach. Public restrooms, showers, canoe launch, fishing and a playground.

NOKOMIS

Nokomis Beach,

100 Casey Key Road, Nokomis

Nokomis Beach is Sarasota County's oldest public beach. Swimming, lifeguards, boardwalk, canoe/kayak launch, boat ramp and dock on bayside, picnic shelters, playground, volleyball, beachside restrooms, bayside portable restrooms, parking.

SARASOTA

SIESTA KEY BEACH

948 Beach Road, Sarasota

"The world's finest, whitest sand" along the Gulf of Mexico. Quartz sand stays cool under your feet. Fishing, boating, parasailing, kayaking, snorkeling and swimming. In 2011, Siesta Beach was rated as the No. 1 beach in the United States by "Dr. Beach."

CRESCENT BEACH

6499 Midnight Pass Road, Sarasota

Enjoy the gulf waters in a more secluded setting. At the southern tip of Crescent Beach, you'll find Point of Rocks, an area rich with coral formations and colorful marine life that is perfect for snorkeling or diving. Crescent Beach is the most private, non-private beach in town.

TURTLE BEACH

8918 Midnight Pass Road, Sarasota

Turtle Beach is located on the southern tip of Siesta Key. Turtle Beach offers picnic areas, playground, volleyball court, horseshoe pit, A boat launch area and fishing is permitted in the adjacent Blind Pass Lagoon. This area has restaurants, shopping and a few local night spots nearby.

FORT MYERS

FORT MYERS BEACH

6090 Estero Blvd., Fort Myers Beach

Fort Myers Beach is seven miles of coastline on Estero Island, which is recovering from Hurricane Ian.



BOAT AND YACHT CLUBS, **LEARN TO SAIL**

PHOTO BY TOM O'NEILL

Sail boats at Port Charlotte Beach Park.

BOAT CLUBS

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941-548-9222
freedomboatclub.com

Freedom Boat Club

150 Lashley Court, #117, Punta Gorda
239-218-7653
www.freedomboatclub.com

Punta Gorda Boat Club

802 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda
941-639-3828
www.pgboatclub.org

~ See SAIL on page 54



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BIKE PATHWAYS & TRAILS

By COURT NEDERVELD

Walkers and cyclists put the sidewalks and pathways to good use in Punta Gorda.

Eighteen miles of lighted, landscaped and level paths called Punta Gorda Pathways wander through downtown and along Charlotte Harbor. Many stop along the way to enjoy lunch, watch boats, and maybe even spot a dolphin along the way.

Trail riding a favorite pastime? Look up the Pioneer Cape Haze Trail in the western part of the county. Another spectacular ride is the Babcock/ Webb Wildlife Management Area.

If you enjoy longer rides there are four signed routes starting from Gilchrist Park in Punta Gorda.

The Tour de Punta Gorda is an 18-mile route primarily in the city limits.

The Bridges route takes us 32 miles and finds 12 mountains (OK, maybe they're bridges) to climb — two of which cross over Charlotte Harbor.

The Tropical Gulf Route is 28 miles through



FILE PHOTO

The annual Tour de North Port takes place in October. This scenic bicycle ride has routes of 15, 35 or 65 miles that travel through some of North Port's most beautiful, natural settings featuring the Florida pine flatwoods and the parks that border the Myakkahatchee Creek with each route having its own color-coded road markings. The Tour de North Port is not a race. www.peoplefortrees.com. Sponsored by People for Trees, Inc.

some neighborhoods and then out into some forested, quiet areas of the county, again with an excellent chance to see Florida wildlife.

Finally, the Washington Loop route, one of the locals' favorites, is a 30-mile circuit traveling out of the city through horse farms and rural areas of Charlotte County.

~ From SAIL on page 53

Freedom Boat Club

990 La Guna Drive, Venice
941-800-5922
freedomboatclub.com

Waves Boat & Social Club

260 Maryland Ave., Englewood
866-857-1018
www.wavesboatclub.com

Waves Boat & Social Club

509 N. Tamiami Trail N., Venice
941-795-1600
www.wavesboatclub.com

YACHT CLUBS

Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club

4400 Lister St., Port Charlotte
941-629-5131
charlotteharboryc.com

Sarasota Yacht Club

1100 John Ringling Blvd., Sarasota
941-365-4191
www.sarasotayachtclub.org

South Venice Yacht Club

4425 Yacht Club Drive, Venice
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1330 Tarpon Center Drive, Venice
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chysailing.org

Englewood Sailing Association

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www.inglewoodsailing.org

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RIDING THE LEGACY TRAIL

PHOTO COURTESY OF THOMAS WESTFALL

The Legacy Trail bridge over Dona Bay is enjoyed by pedestrians and bicyclists.

One of the most popular destinations in our area for cyclists is the Legacy Trail, which opened in 2008.

Connecting communities in Sarasota, Osprey, Nokomis, Venice and South Venice, the trail is a wide, smoothly paved path for walkers, roller bladers and bicyclists.

There are trailheads, parking areas and seating all along the route. There are short, middle and long distance routes ranging from 21 to 62 miles.

The new North Port Connector is accessible at two points: at West Price Boulevard and the

MAPS AND TRAIL

information can be found on the Friends of the Legacy Trail website at www.LegacyTrailFriends.org.

Forbes Trail entrance at Deer Prairie Creek Preserve.

The stretch from West Price to Interstate 75 runs along backyards of housing but far enough to not be intrusive. Public rest areas are not included.



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Phone: (941) 426-2050
Fax: (941) 426-8659

UPPER CAMPUS
2757 Sycamore Street
North Port, FL 34289
Phone: (941) 426-2050
Fax: (941) 426-1326

Parent Information Sessions

Guided Tours are offered weekly. Space is limited, so please RSVP by calling the school office at (941) 426-2050.



AP FILE PHOTO

The Tampa Bay Rays and Atlanta Braves line the baselines after the national anthem and ceremony to open the Braves' spring training home in North Port.

PLAY BALL: Spring Training



ATLANTA BRAVES

CoolToday Park
18800 S. West Villages Parkway,
Wellen Park

TAMPA BAY RAYS

Charlotte Sports Park
2300 El Jobean Road, Port Charlotte

BOSTON RED SOX

JetBlue Park at Fenway South
11500 Fenway South Drive, Fort Myers

MINNESOTA TWINS

CenturyLink Sports Complex
14100 6 Mile Cypress Parkway, Fort Myers

BALTIMORE ORIOLES

Ed Smith Stadium 2700 12th St., Sarasota
www.springtrainingconnection.com



FILE PHOTO

CoolToday Park

PICKLEBALL

STAFF REPORT

The area boasts a number of places one can actively participate in pickleball.

PicklePlex of Punta Gorda offers players the opportunity to play on one of 16 courts.

Gilchrist Park and South Country Recreation Center in Punta Gorda both provide pickleball players with an opportunity to play.

South Country Recreation Center has both indoor and outdoor courts.

Pickleball players can participate in a number of locales in North Port, including Highland Ridge Park and the George Mullen Activity Center.

For those interested in becoming involved in the sport in Port Charlotte, the Harold Avenue Rec Center offers indoor play.

Englewood hosts a series of AAU tournaments and the Englewood Sports Complex boasts 10 outdoor and four indoor courts.



FILE PHOTO

Bruce Vogt and Michelle Petry, both of Englewood, vie for the ball during mixed-doubles tournament play.

The Recreation Center at Tringali Park in Englewood also offers indoor pickleball play.

Foxworthy/By-Pass Park, the Salvation Army and Pinebrook Park are among the places you can play in Venice.

Pickleball is also played at Venice Community Center, 326 S. Nokomis Ave., Venice.

941-492-6064

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GOLF COURSES

FILE PHOTO

Several holes at Plantation Golf & Country Club force golfers to make careful approach shots.

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602 Bird Bay Drive W., Venice

941-485-9333

BOCA ROYALE GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

1601 Englewood Road, Englewood

941-475-6464

CALUSA LAKES GOLF CLUB

1995 Calusa Lakes Blvd., Nokomis

941-484-8995

CAPRI ISLES GOLF CLUB

849 Capri Isles Blvd., Venice

941-485-3371

CORAL CREEK CLUB

13111 Gasparilla Road, Placida

941-697-0830

HERON CREEK GOLF

3401 S. Sumter Blvd., North Port

941-423-6755

LEMON BAY GOLF CLUB

9600 Eagle Preserve Drive, Englewood

941-697-3729

MISSION VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

1851 Mission Valley Blvd., Nokomis

941-488-9683

MYAKKA PINES GOLF CLUB

2550 S. River Road, Englewood

941-474-1753

PLANTATION GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

500 Rockley Blvd., Venice

941-497-1494

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499 Derbyshire Drive, Venice

941-496-4653

PORT CHARLOTTE GOLF CLUB

22400 Gleneagles Terrace, Port Charlotte

941-625-4109

RIVERWOOD GOLF CLUB

4100 Riverwood Drive, Port Charlotte

941-764-6661

ROTONDA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

100 Rotonda Circle, Rotonda West

941-697-2414



FILE PHOTO

Oaks No. 1 at Heron Creek Golf and Country Club features a lake to the left and a steep hill that creates a picturesque tee shot.

SARASOTA NATIONAL GOLF CLUB

25510 National Blvd., Venice
941-496-8676

VENETIAN GOLF & RIVER CLUB

105 Pesaro Drive, Nokomis
941-483-4811

VENICE EAST GOLF COURSE

107 Venice E Blvd., Venice
941-493-0005

THE VENICE

GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

250 Venice Golf Club Drive, Venice
941-492-9600

WATERFORD GOLF CLUB

1454 Gleneagles Drive, Venice
941-484-6621

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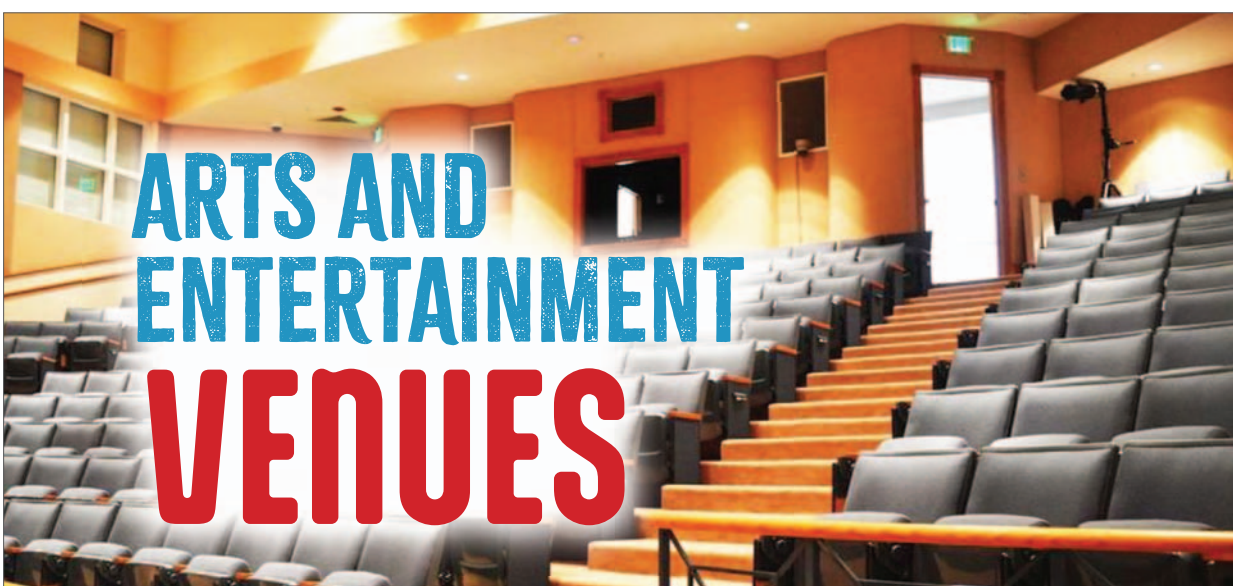
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ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT VENUES

PHOTO PROVIDED

Gulf Theater at the Military Heritage Museum

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1,874-seat facility featuring musicals, symphonies and other events. 13350 FSW Parkway, Fort Myers 239-481-4849, bbmannpah.com

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Lunch and dinner menu with a Broadway-style show. 1380 Colonial Blvd., Fort Myers broadwaypalm.com

CHARLOTTE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

Annual county fair, live music, expos and more. 2333 El Jobean Road, Port Charlotte <https://thecharlottecountyfair.com>

CHARLOTTE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

High school theater. 701 Carmalita St., Punta Gorda 941-637-0459 thecpac.net

CHARLOTTE HARBOR EVENT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Variety of live entertainment and events. 75 Taylor St., Punta Gorda 941-833-5444, charlotteharborecc.com

CHARLOTTE PLAYERS LANGDON PLAYHOUSE COMMUNITY THEATER

1182 Market Circle, Port Charlotte 941-255-1022, charlotteplayers.org

GULF THEATER

at the Military Heritage Museum. Variety of live entertainment. 900 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda 941-205-8545, <https://gulftheater.org>

THE HERMITAGE ARTIST RETREAT

Variety of live entertainment. 6660 Manasota Key Road, Englewood 941-475-2098 or <https://hermitageartistretreat.org>



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Hermitage Artist Retreat

LEMON BAY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Events and live performances. 2201 Placida Road, Englewood 941-474-7702, ext 3030 lbhpac.yourcharlotteschools.net/contact.html

LEMON BAY PLAYHOUSE

Live plays, live music, comedy and more. 96 W. Dearborn St., Englewood 941-475-6756, lemonbayplayhouse.com

NORTH PORT PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

High school theater. 6400 W. Price Blvd., North Port, nppaa.net

VAN WEZEL PERFORMING ARTS HALL

Live theater, concerts. 777 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, 941-953-3368, vanwezel.org

VENICE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

High school theater. 1 Indian Ave., building 5, Venice, 941-218-3779, veniceperformingartscenter.com

VENICE THEATRE

Live plays, concerts. 140 W. Tampa Ave., Venice 941-488-1115, venicestage.com

VISANI RESTAURANT AND COMEDY THEATER

Comedy club and dinner theater. 2400 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte 941-629-9191, www.visani.net

AREA PARKS

OLD FLORIDA PARKS

MYAKKA STATE FOREST

Within the city limits of North Port, just off River Road, is Myakka State Forest. The state forest is more than 8,500 acres that includes miles of hiking and biking trails. The park also offers canoe launches, picnic areas and rural camping for those who enjoy a primitive lifestyle, including a campsite right along the Myakka River. It also allows some small-game hunting during certain times of the year. 2000 S. River Road, Englewood. 941-460-1333, www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices/Florida-Forest-Service/Our-Forests/State-Forests/Myakka-State-Forest.

OSCAR SCHERER STATE PARK

Florida state parks provide habitat for many rare, threatened, or endangered plants and animals. With 1382 acres comprised of pine flatwoods, a blackwater stream called South Creek, and two freshwater lakes, Oscar Scherer State Park is no

~ Continued on page 62



FILE PHOTO

The "Brother Reading a Book" sculpture in the Garden of the Five Senses on Pan American Boulevard in North Port is one of several pieces of public art scattered around the city.



FILE PHOTO

Old Florida trees and brush are aspects of both Myakka River State Park near Sarasota and Myakka State Forest between North Port and Englewood.



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FILE PHOTO

Alligators, turtles and vultures coexist along the Myakka River at the outlet to the Myakka Lake inside Myakka River State Park near Sarasota. Hundreds, if not thousands, of alligators are in its lakes, ponds and rivers.

exception. The park in particular is noted for its population of scrub-jays, gopher tortoises and indigo snakes. 1843 S Tamiami Trail, Osprey. 941-483-5956, www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/oscar-scherer-state-park.

MYAKKA RIVER STATE PARK

Located about a half-hour drive from West Villages — north on Interstate 75 and east on State Road 72. And while alligators are all over Florida, they are especially known to live in the state park. It is home to Deep Hole, a sink hole about 2 miles away from the rest of the park. After the hike, you may see between 30 and more than 200 alligators basking or swimming in the body of water. To take in that adventure, you must receive a wilderness permit from the state park's ranger station at the front of the property.

There is a limited number given out each day and are often taken within minutes of the park's 8 a.m. opening. The state park, one of the state's oldest, also has boat tours on Myakka Lake where you can view wildlife. A popular part of the state park is the canopy walk, a short hike from the main road.

For those willing to take it, there's a structure to check out, 76 feet in the air and above the tree canopy — giving a new view on Old Florida.

13208 State Road 72, Sarasota. 941-361-6511, www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/myakka-river-state-park.

UNUSUAL PARKS

GARDEN OF THE FIVE SENSES

16-acre park opened in 2007 and was dedicated

to the late Jean Bruhn, a former Parks & Recreation Advisory Board member. The garden that fosters an appreciation of nature, landscaping, preserving our natural resources and promoting environmental education through a natural interpretation and use of all the senses. 4299 Pan American Blvd., North Port. 941-240-8125, www.visitsarasota.com/parks/garden-five-senses.

HISTORY PARK

A nine-acre park in the central part of the Punta Gorda that serves as a relocation site for significantly historic structures saved from demolition. This facility is operated in conjunction with the Punta Gorda Historical Society. The park currently has four local historic homes, three are open to the public. In addition, the site hosts a weekly Farmer's Market on Sundays throughout the year and has a community garden. 501 Shreve St., Punta Gorda. www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us.

CASPERSEN BEACH PARK

The park is bordered by the Gulf of Mexico on the westside and the Intracoastal Waterway on the east. One of the best times visit is after a storm. That's when shell and shark tooth hunters gather to look for treasures. The park is unusual in another way, its dark sands make it unlike any other area beach. In addition, its the southernmost point of the Venetian Waterway Park Trail, so you can ride your bike or walk there from one of the many stops along the trail. The park is open 6 a.m. to midnight all year round. 4100 Harbor Drive, Venice. 941-861-5000, www.visitsarasota.com/parks/caspersen-beach-park.

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facebook.com/APetsFriendAnimalHospital

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941 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte
941-625-9900, allcreaturesvethospital.com

ANIMAL ARK OF ARCADIA

109 S. Desoto Ave, Arcadia
863-494-2101, animalarkofarcadia.com

ARCADIA ANIMAL HOSPITAL INC.

2865 S.E. Highway 31, Arcadia
863-494-5566

ARK ANIMAL HOSPITAL & CLINIC

2000 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice
941-493-3300, arkanimal.com

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19530 Cochran Blvd., Port Charlotte
941-613-6834, banfield.com



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BIVENS ANIMAL HOSPITAL

223 Duncan Road, Punta Gorda
941-621-4818, bivensanimalhospital.com

BURNT STORE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

16480 Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda
239-315-0729, burntstoreanimalhospital.com

CHARLOTTE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

4200 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte
941-625-6111, charlotteanimalhospital.net

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~ Continued on page 64

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941-474-1295, eahvet.com

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3135 Bobcat Village Center Rd, North Port
941-200-5779
gulfoastscratchingpost.com

HERON CREEK ANIMAL HOSPITAL

1319 Sumter Blvd, North Port
941-423-3503, heroncreekanimalhospital.com

ISLAND ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF VENICE

157 Miami Ave. E., Venice
941-484-9908, islandanimalhospitalofvenice.com

JACARANDA ANIMAL HOSPITAL

725 Shamrock Blvd., Venice
941-497-1676,
jacarandaanimalhospital.com

LEMON BAY ANIMAL HOSPITAL

3060 S McCall Rd, Englewood
941-474-7711
lemonbayanimalhospital.vetstreet.com

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2011 Englewood Rd # A, Englewood
941-474-7771, lovingcarevh.com

LOVING PAWS ANIMAL HOSPITAL

2695 Tamiami Trail, Unit B, Port Charlotte
941-766-8555, lovingpawsah.com

MARANO ANIMAL HOSPITAL

363 Jacaranda Blvd., Venice
941-480-0055, maranoanimalhospital.com

NEW HOPE PET HOSPITAL

24901 Sandhill Blvd., Suite 10, Punta Gorda
941-764-4673, newhopepethospital.com

NORTH PORT ANIMAL HOSPITAL

14487 Tamiami Trail, North Port
941-304-4795, northportanimal.com

PUNTA GORDA ANIMAL HOSPITAL

25120 Marion Ave., Punta Gorda
941-639-8717, puntagordaah.com

SMALL ANIMAL HOSPITAL

3307 Railroad St., Fort Myers
239-332-1194, fortmyersvet.com

SOUTH TRAIL ANIMAL HOSPITAL

1861 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice
941-497-0033, facebook.com/STAHofVenice/

SUNNYBROOK ANIMAL HOSPITAL

4089 S. Access Road Englewood
941-474-6393, sunnybrookah.com

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1491 Collingswood Blvd, Port Charlotte
941 625-7500

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3519 Drance St., Port Charlotte
941-625-6720
www.awlshelter.org

EARS ANIMAL RESCUE SANCTUARY

145 W. Dearborn St., Englewood
941-681-3877
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EAST COAST HUMANE SOCIETY, INC.

(Venice Chapter)
503 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice.
www.eastcoasthumanesociety.com

HUMANE SOCIETY OF SARASOTA

2331 15th St., Sarasota. 941-955-4131
www.hssc.org

SUNCOAST HUMANE SOCIETY

6781 San Casa Drive, Englewood
941-474-7884
www.humane.org

ANIMAL MEDICAL CLINIC OF NORTH PORT

13608 Tamiami Trail, North Port
941-426-6882, veterinariannorthportfl.com

ANIMAL MEDICAL CLINIC OF PUNTA GORDA

324 Cross St. #111, Punta Gorda
941-639-9600, puntagordavet.net

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720 N. Tamiami Trail, Nokomis
941-485-1555, brantvetclinic.com

BRIGHT CROSS ANIMAL CLINIC

4165 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice
941-408-9696, https://brightcross.com

CHOICE VETERINARY SERVICES

6101 Duncan Road, #105, Punta Gorda
941-347-7212, Choicevetservices.com

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1548 SW Wisteria St, Arcadia
863-993-2712, crankshawveterinaryservices.com

DESOTO VETERINARY SERVICES

1240 FL-31, Arcadia
863-993-9924

DOGWOOD ANIMAL CLINIC

2716 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte
941-629-2126

ENGLEWOOD ANIMAL HEALTH CENTER

1830 Placida Road, Englewood
941-474-8881
englewoodanimalhealthcenter.com

FLORIDA ANIMAL CARE

11002 Nathan Court, Punta Gorda
941-637-6006, floridaanimalcare.com

GULF COAST SCRATCHING POST CAT HOSPITAL

3135 Bobcat Village Center Road, North Port
941-200-5779, gulfcoastscratchingpost.com

GROVES VETERINARY CLINIC

848 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte
941-391-5251, grovesvetclinic.com

LAUREL ROAD VETERINARY CLINIC

2474 Laurel Road E., Nokomis
941-480-9707, laurelrdvetclinic.com

MEDLIN EXOTIC ANIMAL MEDICAL SERVICES

14361 Metropolis Ave., #2, Fort Myers.
239-989-8860, meams.vet

MYAKKA RIVER ANIMAL CLINIC

3146 Venice Ave., Venice
941-488-1455, myakkariveranimalclinic.com

PARK AVENUE VETERINARY

208 Yorkshire St., Port Charlotte • 519-763-6252

PEACE RIVER VETERINARY CLINIC

327 Cross St., Punta Gorda
941-205-5400, peacerivervets.com

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA VETERINARY SERVICES

12288 County Rd. 769, Lake Suzy
941-876-5068, swflvets.com

TOLEDO BLADE ANIMAL CLINIC

2001 Bobcat Village Center Road, North Port
941-426-9502, toledobladeanimalclinic.com

THE ANIMAL CLINIC

3300 N. Tamiami Trail, #103A, Port Charlotte
941-732-7479, theanimalclinic.net

VENICE ANIMAL CLINIC

1267 U.S. 41 Bypass, Venice
941-485-9605, veniceanimalclinic.com

VENICE PINES VETERINARY CLINIC

1168 Indian Hills Blvd., Venice
941-492-9692, Venicepinesvet.com

VETERINARY ASSOCIATES

1168 Jacaranda Blvd., Venice
941-492-3080

VETERINARY CARE OF VENICE

1080 E. Venice Ave., Venice
941-488-4247, vetcarevenice.com

VETERINARY EMERGENCY CLINIC

17829 Murdock Circle
Suite#1, Port Charlotte
941-229-3518, veterinaryemergencyclinic.com

WEST COAST VETERINARY CLINIC

1512 U.S. 41 Bypass, Venice
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DOG FRIENDLY PARKS

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There is nothing dogs like better than running around with their owners and socializing with other canines.

There are dog specific parks and dog-friendly parks across Southwest Florida. Just be sure to check the websites to familiarize yourself with the rules.

Among the rules: Animals should not disturb other park users, other animals or resources by being noisy, dangerous, intimidating or destructive. They also may not be left unattended in parked vehicles or be tethered to any tree, plant, building or park equipment.

Some city parks, beaches, piers and playgrounds don't allow any dogs unless they are service dogs.

Most dog parks require dogs be vaccinated and display current tags in accordance with state law and county ordinance.

Some require leashes or that small dogs and large dogs play in separate areas.

Also, don't forget to clean up after your pup.

Hounds on Henry at 1098 W Virginia Ave. in Punta Gorda, the Canine Club Dog Park at 6442 Appomattox Dr in North Port, Edgewater Paw Park at 22410 Glass Lane in Port Charlotte and Ann & Chuck Dever Regional Paw Park at 6791 San Casa Drive in Englewood have leash-free areas.

Brohard Paw Park at 1850 S. Harbor Drive in Venice not only has places for dogs to run, but they have their own beach access too.

A sampling of places where dogs are allowed on a leash:

- Alice Park,
802 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda
- Bayshore Live Oak Park,

23157 Bayshore Road, Port Charlotte

- Cape Haze Pioneer Trail Park,
1688 Gasparilla Road, Rotonda
- Harbour Heights Park,
27420 Voyageur Drive, Punta Gorda
- Indian Mound Park,
210 Winson Ave., Englewood
- Jelks Preserve, 2300 N. River Road, Venice
- Kiwanis Park, 501 Donora St., Port Charlotte
- Laishley Park,
120 Laishley Court, Punta Gorda
- Lemon Bay Park and Environment Center,
570 Bay Park Blvd., Englewood
- Legacy Trail (with various access points in North Port and Venice)
- Nathan Benderson Park,
5851 Nathan Benderson Circle, Sarasota
- Nature Park,
1555 Aqui Esta Drive, Punta Gorda
- Nokomis Riverview Park,
251 Riverview Drive S., Nokomis
- North Charlotte Regional Park,
1185 O'Donnell Blvd., Port Charlotte
- Ollie's Pond Park,
18235 Avon Ave., Port Charlotte
- Pittman Park,
400 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda
- Port Charlotte Beach Park,
4500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte
- Punta Gorda Pathways (There are three segments: Harborwalk, Linear Park and shared-use paths in 18 miles throughout the city limits.)
- Randy Spence Park,
4333 Kerrigan Circle, Port Charlotte
- Woodmere Dog Park,
3951 Woodmere Park Blvd., Venice

COOL OFF AT WATER PARKS AND SPLASH PADS

SUN FILE PHOTO

The splash pad or interactive fountain at Laishley Park in Punta Gorda.

WATER PARKS

NORTH PORT AQUATIC CENTER

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6205 W. Price Blvd., North Port
941-429-7275, www.cityofnorthport.com

SUN SPLASH FAMILY WATERPARK

Seasonal amusement park with 14+ acres of waterslides, a lazy river and kids' water play area.

400 Santa Barbara Blvd., Cape Coral
239-574-0558, sunsplashwaterpark.com

ADVENTURE ISLAND

Located across from Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, the park features 30 acres of water rides, dining, and other attractions.

10001 McKinley Drive, Tampa
adventureisland.com

SPLASH PADS

LAISHLEY PARK INTERACTIVE FOUNTAIN

This is a perfect place for a family outing or picnic. Covered seating is provided for those who want to watch the kids frolic in the water. There is a neighboring park and play area. 120 Laishley Court, Laishley Park, Punta Gorda.
www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us/visitors/laishley-park/interactive-fountain

MCGUIRE PARK SPLASH PAD

Gallons of cool water cascade around you on a hot day. 21125 McGuire Ave., Port Charlotte.
www.charlottecountyfl.gov

~ Continued on page 68

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PHOTO PROVIDED BY SUN SPLASH FAMILY WATERPARK

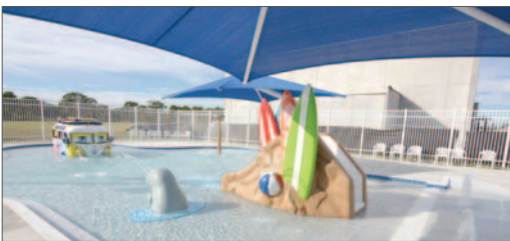
Sun Splash Family Waterpark in Cape Coral is home to more than 14 acres of attractions for visitors of all ages including the Electric Slide, Cape Fear, Lazy River and Pirate's Cove.

CHILDREN'S INTERACTIVE FOUNTAIN

The Children's Interactive Fountain is located in Centennial Park near the gazebo. Open from 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. daily. Children must be accompanied by an adult and no pets are allowed. 200 W. Venice Ave., Venice www.venicegov.com/visiting/fountain

ANN & CHUCK DEVER REGIONAL PARK SPLASH PAD

Features a shallow wading pool with a small slide, downspouts and bubblers. 7001 San Casa Drive, Englewood.



SUN PHOTO BY SANDY MACYS

The splash pad at the Ann Dever Park in Englewood.

ATWATER COMMUNITY PARK SPLASH PAD

The 25-acre Atwater Community Park offers a splash pad with ample seating. 4475 Skyway Ave., North Port. www.cityofnorthport.com

MCSWAIN PARK

Benches and picnic tables, restrooms, splash pad area and a playground. 16 S. Volusia Ave., Arcadia. <https://arcadia-fl.gov/departments/public-works/parks-division>

WELLEN PARK

Kids can have a blast while parents relax comfortably within their eyesight but out of the splash zone. Downtown Wellen, 12275 Mercado Drive, Wellen Park. <https://wellenpark.com/blog/stay-cool-in-downtown-wellen>



PHOTO PROVIDED

The waterslide is one of the highlights of the North Port Aquatic Center.



SUN FILE PHOTO

Splash pad at McGuire Park in Port Charlotte.

FARMERS MARKETS

FRESH HARVEST FARMERS MARKET AT WELLEN PARK

9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sundays. Fresh fruit, vegetables, plants, seafood, cut flowers, crafts and more. wellenpark.com/events/fresh-harvest-farmers-market.

WELLEN PARK NIGHT MARKET

Takes place on the second Thursday of each month from 6-9 p.m. in Downtown Wellen Park, 19745 Wellen Park Blvd., Wellen Park. Home decor, fashion, art, design, food and more. The market will feature a rotating line-up of vendors each month. <https://wellenpark.com>.

PUNTA GORDA'S DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET

8 a.m.-noon May-September and 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays October-April. Located at the corner of Taylor and Olympia in downtown Punta Gorda. <https://puntagordachamber.com/punta-gorda-farmers-market>.



SHUTTERSTOCK

In addition to fruits and veggies, farmers markets are a great place to find yummy baked goods.

PUNTA GORDA HISTORY PARK SUNDAY MARKET

Fresh produce, baked goods, plants, soaps, candles, jewelry, live music and more at History Park, 501 Shreve St., Punta Gorda, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sundays. www.facebook.com/historyparkmarket.

HAPPY HOUR MARKETPLACE

5-8 p.m. Fridays. A variety vendors, cultural activities, live music and more. 361 Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, Punta Gorda. www.facebook.com/HappyHourMarketplace.

~ Continued on page 70

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VENICE FARMERS MARKET

8 a.m.-noon Saturdays April-September and 8 a.m.-1 p.m. October-March. City Hall, 401 W. Venice Ave., Venice. 941-445-9209 or <https://www.thevenicefarmersmarket.org>.

MANTA MARKET AT LEMON BAY HIGH SCHOOL

9 a.m.-2 p.m. Nov. 11, Dec. 9, Jan. 13, Feb. 10, March 9. Arts, crafts, foods and more. Lemon Bay

High School, 2201 Placida Road, Englewood. www.facebook.com/LBHSMantaMarket.

OLDE ENGLEWOOD VILLAGE FARMERS MARKET

300 W. Dearborn St., Englewood. Every Thursday (except Thanksgiving) from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. October-May to get some of Florida's finest local produce, prepared foods and much more. www.oldeenglewoodvillagefarmersmarket.org.

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SHOPPING



Southwest Florida has plenty of places to shop including local boutiques, art galleries, specialty shops and malls. Some are in unique settings.

PUNTA GORDA

Downtown Punta Gorda has much to offer foodies, shoppers and funseekers. The restaurant choices range from gourmet dining to casual waterfront fare, from down-home cooking to international flair. Stroll along the banks of the Peace River or window shop along West Marion Avenue. Punta Gorda also boasts a thriving nightlife that includes unique Old-World pubs, sidewalk cafes and riverside sports bars.

Fishermen's Village In addition to its

sweeping views of beautiful Charlotte Harbor, historic Fishermen's Village offers a little bit of everything, from fine dining to casual cocktails, sightseeing and sunset boat tours, chartered fishing boats and a full-service marina. The Village, which doubles as a resort, also boasts waterfront shopping opportunities that include gourmet goodies and gifts to Florida-casual attire to yachts and diving equipment. For more information, call 941-639-8721. Located at 200 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda.

PORT CHARLOTTE

Port Charlotte Town Center mall is centrally located and offers the traditional

~ Continued on page 72



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SUN FILE PHOTO

The avenues of historic Downtown Venice

shopping opportunities of Beall's, JP Penney, Dillards, DSW Shoes and more. The Town Center also offers a food court and a 16-screen movie theater. Located at 1441 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte.

ENGLEWOOD

West Dearborn Street The historic heart of

Olde Englewood Village, West Dearborn Street offers a variety of restaurants and bistros, live music venues and one-of-a-kind coffee shops. Spend some time shopping the antique and jewelry shops, unique Florida clothing stores, and galleries that feature the creative talent of a thriving arts community. Thursday is Farmers Market day from October to May, and festivals

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and events are planned at Pioneer Plaza nearly every weekend. Plan to spend a day getting to know this old-Florida beach town. Located at Dearborn Street, Englewood.

NORTH PORT

Cocoplum Village Shops North Port's 375,000-square-foot shopping center, which opened in 2010, has Dick's Sporting Goods, Hobby Lobby, TJ Maxx, Ross Dress for Less, Ulta, Panera Bread, Five Below, First Watch and more. Located at 17179 Tamiami Trail, North Port.

ARCADIA

Downtown Arcadia If you're looking for some old-Florida charm, a 35-mile drive northeast of Port Charlotte takes you to the town of Arcadia, a great day trip destination. With a history steeped in Florida Cracker cowboy culture, Arcadia offers more than 25 antique and specialty shops, many unique dining destinations and its new Mosaic Arena, home of the Arcadia All Florida Championship Rodeo. The downtown is very walkable, just park your car and walk from shop to shop.

VENICE

West Venice Avenue The shops of this main downtown street as well as its adjoining streets

offer dozens of unique gift and apparel shops, sidewalk cafés, fine dining and Florida-casual ambiance. Take a stroll down the tree-lined linear park and hunt for sharks teeth at Venice Beach.

FORT MYERS

Edison Mall has a store for everyone including American Eagle Outfitters, Bath & Body Works, Books-a-Million, Champs Sports, Claire's, Dillards, Foot Locker, G by Guess, JCPenney, Vans and Yankee Candle..During your visit enjoy a meal at one of the many dining options. 4125 Cleveland Ave., Fort Myers.

Miromar Outlets offers more than 140 designer and brand name stores such as Abercrombie & Fitch, Ann Taylor, Banana Republic, Bose, Calvin Klein, Columbia Sportswear, Coach, H & M, Nike and Michael Kors. Hungry? No problem — restaurants ranging from fast food to fine dining are available. Located at 10801 Corkscrew Road, Estero.

SARASOTA

The Mall at University Town Center (UTC) has more than 150 stores and restaurants.

~ Continued on page 74

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Aerial photo of intersection of Marion Avenue and Taylor Road in downtown Punta Gorda.

SUN FILE PHOTO

Apple, Microsoft, Crate & Barrel, Hollister, Saks Fifth Avenue and Williams-Sonoma are just a few of the brands that have retail stores in the UTC Mall. Restaurants range from diners to fine dining. Located at 140 University Town Center Drive, Sarasota.

St. Armands Circle This is one of Florida's

most well-known shopping areas and it is in the center of beautiful St. Armand's Key. Unique galleries, spas, jewelry casual wear and formal dining — including the iconic Columbia Restaurant — are all encompassed within the circle. Located at St. Armand's Circle, Sarasota.

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TASTE OF SOUTHWEST

FLORIDA

There are many restaurants in the area offering a variety of tasty entrees, appetizers, beverages and treats. Here's a sample from the area.

PUNTA GORDA

Ice House Pub

Built in the 1890s, the structure was used as an ice plant for the fishing industry. British style-pub entertainment is available including games like snooker, bar billiards, steel tipped darts and dominoes. 408 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda. 941-575-0866, www.theicehousepub.com

Celtic Ray Public House

Enjoy the atmosphere of a traditional Irish pub. 145 E Marion Ave, Punta Gorda, 941-916-9115, celticray.net

Carmelo's Italian Ristorante

Upbeat trattoria offering classic Italian fare and a full bar, plus garden seats and live music nights. 321 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda. 941-621-4091, www.carmelosristorante.com

Village Brewhouse

Local brewhouse with a diverse menu overlooking Charlotte Harbor that serves up fresh seafood and American cuisine. 1200 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda, 941-621-8329, thevillagebrewhouse.com

Harpoon Harry's

Open air, boat-casual seafood restaurant with full dining deck, three bars and live music overlooking the water. Fishermen's Village, 1200 W Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1177, <https://harpoonharrys.com>

John Ski's House of Breakfast and Lunch

Heaping portions of hearty American breakfast and lunch staples. 502 King St., Punta Gorda. 941-347-7645, johnskishouseofbreakfast.com



FILE PHOTO

The Ice House Pub is an authentic English styled pub, located in the heart of Punta Gorda.



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~ Continued on page 76

Leroy's Southern Kitchen & Bar
Homemade Southern cooking. 201 W Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-505-2489. www.leroyspg.com

Harpoon Harry's
An open air, boat-casual, seafood restaurant with live music. 1200 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1177, <https://harpoonharrys.com>

Smoke House Restaurant
Serving Southern staples for breakfast and lunch. 415 Cooper St., Punta Gorda, 941-639-2000

Dean's South of the Border
American, Tex-Mex and sushi cantina with live music and more. 130 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda. 941-575-6100, <https://deansouthoftheborder.com>

Pho Saigon Punta Gorda
Vietnamese restaurant famous for its Pho selections. 318 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda. 941-575-7799, www.phopg.com

Sandra's Restaurant
Serves plates of family recipes from Germany, France and other European cuisines. 111 W. Olympia Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-575-0177, www.sandras-restaurant.com



FILE PHOTO
Village Brewhouse brings a home-brewed vibe back to the center of Fishermen's Village.

F.M. Don's
Located in historic downtown Punta Gorda, Chef Keith utilizes French techniques while keeping the menu fresh, varied and approachable. 201 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. 941-637-8800, www.fmdons.com

Jelly Bird Café & Bakery
Homemade menu items and baked goods, Jelly Bird's decor echoes the country store in small ways: lace doilies, unmatched salt and pepper shakers, comfy cushions, knickknack shelves and wooden tables. 1133 Bal Harbor Blvd., Punta Gorda. 941-626-8320

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FILE PHOTO

The Celtic Ray Public House is in downtown Punta Gorda at the corner of E. Marion Avenue and Nesbit Street. The owners have purchased property across the street on Nesbit with plans for a hotel and pub.

Winesett House

Brick-walled tavern with a seafood-focused menu, casually elegant atmosphere and patio seating. 139 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda, 941-637-9477, www.winesetthouse.com

Laishley Crab House

Seafood classics and sushi at a waterside eatery. 150 Laishley Court, Punta Gorda, 941-205-5566, <https://laishleycrabhouse.com>

Peace River Seafood

Serving up steamed blue crab, shrimp and oysters in a simple setting with an on-site market. 5337 Duncan Road, Punta Gorda, 941-505-8440, <https://www.peacerriverseafood.com/>

Wyvern Hotel

Perch 360 Rooftop Restaurant & Bar: Cocktails, local craft beers and boutique wines along with a Tapas menu. Wyvern Hotel, 101 E. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda, 941-639-7700, www.perch360.com

88 Keys Florida

Open for breakfast and dinner, offering refined ambiance and fine dining options from locally sourced farms and a meticulous blend of taste and healthy options. The restaurant will serve craft cocktails and boutique wines as well as a proprietors list of signature high end wines.

Four Points by Sheraton

TT's Tiki Bar: Cocktails, frozen drinks, food and waterfront ambiance with live music. 33 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda. 941-637-6770, www.ttspg.com

Dockside Grill

Traditional American flavors for breakfast and dinner. Four Points by Sheraton, 33 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda. 941-637-6770, www.docksidepg.com

The Library Comedy Club

A rotating lineup of local and national comedic talents. Four Points by Sheraton, 33 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda, 305-343-2930, degame@att.net



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~ Continued on page 78



FILE PHOTO

Husband and wife Wyatt and Lex Wood run Sweet Scoops, passed down from Wyatt's parents.

PORT CHARLOTTE

Sunseeker Resort on Charlotte Harbor

Fine dining to casual eateries. 5500 Sunseeker Way, Charlotte Harbor. 833-914-7300, www.sunseekeresorts.com

Visani Italian Steakhouse and Comedy Theater

Live entertainment from comedy to live music served with made from scratch food available with all shows. 2400 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte. 941-629-9191, www.visani.net

Twisted Fork

Dig into some chef-inspired, down-home

Florida cuisine at the Twisted Fork. Enjoy the live music and events at the Back Porch. 2208 El Jobean Road, Port Charlotte. 941-235-3675, <https://twistedfork.net>

Rossini by Chef Rocco

Fresh, healthy and full of flavor Italian cuisine. 18101 Murdock Circle (mall outparcel), Port Charlotte. www.rossinibychefrocco.com, 941-235-8652

Del Taco

Serving tacos, burritos, burgers, quesadillas, taco salad, shakes, chicken, burgers, fries, desserts and more. 1490 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte. <https://deltaco.com>

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PHOTO PROVIDED

Candied pecan-topped peach pie is one of Reeta McCauley's home-baked treats at Jelly Bird Café & Bakery.

Pioneers Express

Pizza, panini, breadsticks, salads, antipasto and more. Though the menu's designed for express service, there is a 40-seat dining room with Pioneers' signature pop-art murals and 30 more seats on a shaded courtyard. 2686 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte. 941-979-5971

Donato's Italian Restaurant

Traditional Italian-American food. 1900 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte. 941-764-1600, <https://donatosportcharlotte.com>

Pita & Puff

Family-owned Greek food restaurant. 2665 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte. 941-249-4309, www.facebook.com/PitaAndPuff.

Fin Sushi & Grill

Inventive sushi, Japanese cuisine. 24123 Peachland Blvd., Port Charlotte. 941-666-6686, www.finsushifl.com

Prime Serious Steak

Classic steakhouse with a contemporary feel. 19655 Cochran Blvd., Port Charlotte, 941-627-8325 or <https://primeserioussteak.com>

Rosé's Cuisine

Unique flavors, while promoting the essence of island dishes that are rich in flavors and spices. 2395 Tamiami Trail (Bell Plaza), Unit 204, Port Charlotte. 941-235-8908



PHOTO PROVIDED

Sunseeker Resort on Charlotte Harbor features 20 bars and restaurants.

Crazy Conez

Yoders Ice Cream and offer a variety of milkshakes, crazy shakes, bubble shakes, funnel cakes, fried Oreos, funnel cakes, cotton candy, homemade brownies, ice cream nachos, ice cream burritos and more. 2686 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte. 941-447-4675, <https://crazyconezpc.com>

Lava Ice Shop

Soft Italian ice made with the highest quality ingredients to ensure a smooth consistency, similar to ice cream. Dairy free, sugar free and vegan friendly options available. 3280 Tamiami Trail,, Suite 55A, Port Charlotte. 941-629-5282, www.lavaiceshop.com

Hershey's Flavortown

Ice cream, soft-serve custard flavors, plus gluten free, sugar free, cow-free nondairy and mix-ins galore. 1940 Kings Highway, Port Charlotte. 941-889-7206, www.hersheysflavortown.com

Wally's Southern Style BBQ

Barbecue slow cooked to perfection in the smoker, 3591 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte. 941-613-0005, www.wallysbbq.com

~ Continued on page 80



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The Grill At 1951

Brings the basics back with top grade ingredients making foods including beef, fresh seafood and rich pasta dishes, in casual fine dining with local artists playing jazz and popular tunes. 1951 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte, 941-255-0994, <https://thegrillat1951.com>

Sweet Scoops Ice Cream

Ice cream, shakes, smoothies, sundaes and more. The long line has been a feature for decades. These days, as a general rule, even on a weekday night there will be a short line down U.S. 41. The walls are covered with 500 more plates from everywhere, donated by enthusiastic customers. 171 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte. 941-624-3051

NORTH PORT

Dubz BBQ

Seasoned barbeque from secret recipes, slow cooked using wood smokers. 4391 Aidan Lane, North Port. 941-200-2636, www.dubzbbq.com

Maggiore Bistro

Authentic Italian cuisine, burgers, wraps, and sandwiches prepared each dish using traditional recipes passed down through generations. Maggiore Bistro, 3515 Bobcat Village Center Road, North Port. 941-257-8036

Que Rico

Serving classic Colombian plates such as empanadas and sweet plantains. 3648 Tamiami Trail, North Port. 941-888-5647, quericoflavors.com

Sharks Fish House

Family owned and operated since 2002, serving seafood at a reasonable price. 14595 Tamiami Trail, North Port. 941-429-2150, www.sharksfishhousenp.com

VENICE

Allegro Bistro

Seasonal bistro dishes, live jazz and patio seating. 1740 E. Venice Ave, Venice, 941-484-1889, <https://allegro-bistro.com>



SUN PHOTO BY SUE WADE

Pioneers Express has ample indoor seating, as well as about 30 seats on its outdoor courtyard.

Burgundy Square Cafe

All-American menu of comfort foods. 227 Miami Ave. W., Venice. 941-841-1085, [burgundysquarecafe](http://burgundysquarecafe.com)

Café Venice

Fine dining in the heart of downtown Venice 101 W. Venice Ave., Venice. 941-484-1855, www.cafeveniceresaurantandbar.com

Crow's Nest Restaurant, Tavern & Marina

Serving local and fresh off the boat cuisine. 1968 Tarpon Center Drive, Venice. 941-484-9551, www.crowsnest-venice.com

The Living Room

Serves comfort foods in a quirky wine bar ambiance that feels like a living room. 2357 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice. 941-244-2834, thelivingroomvenice.com

Mi Pueblo

Authentic Mexican food and atmosphere. 530 U.S. 41 Bypass, Venice. 941-486-0005, www.mipueblomexican.com

Sharky's On the Pier

Soak in the sunshine at the base of the Venice Fishing Pier while sipping a cool beverage and listening to live music. Serving seafood, pasta, sandwiches and more. 1600 Harbor Drive, Venice. 941-488-1456, www.sharkysonthepier.com

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Gold Rush BBQ

A family owned and operated restaurant with a gold mining theme. Many menu items served in metal gold miner pan. 661 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice. 941-483-3137, www.goldrushbbq.com

Snook Haven

Soak in views of the Myakka River and the wildlife while listening to live music at a slice of Old Florida, serving barbeque, seafood, locally-brewed craft beer and more. 5000 E. Venice Ave., Venice. 941-485-7221, www.snookhaven.com

T.J. Carney's

Irish-theme bar and grill. 231 W. Venice Ave., Venice. 941-480 9244, <http://tjcarneys.com>

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The Banyan House

Downtown's waterfront restaurant with steaks, seafood and pasta.

Oak & Stone

American tavern with craft beer, artisanal pizza and gourmet fare; featuring a selection of more than 50 rotating beers with an emphasis on American craft beers and hometown breweries.

Acqua Pazza

Coastal Italian fare with fresh pasta dishes, slow roasted meat and grilled seafood entrees, as well as classic Italian favorites like lasagna Bolognese, homemade lobster ravioli and fall-off-the-bone ossobuco.



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Villani & Co.

Specializes in steaks, seafood and offers a raw bar, with an extensive menu of small plates, sharable cheese and charcuterie boards. wellenpark.com/shop-dine

ENGLEWOOD

Farlow's On The Water

Touts it's tropical dining which includes a variety of seafood and steak dishes. 2080 S. McCall Road, Englewood. 941-474-5342, www.farlowsonthewater.com

Englewoods On Dearborn

Steak, burgers, salad, seafood, dessert and more, plus happy hour and live music, 941-475-7501, www.engagewoodsondearborn.com

SandBar Tiki & Grille

Seafood, "tiki-tizers," soups, salads, burgers and more. Live music daily and games for the family. Located directly across from Englewood Beach. 1975 Beach Road, Englewood. 941-460-8280, www.sandbartikigrille.com

~ Continued on page 82

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Lock 'N Key Restaurant

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Ken & Barb's Grove City Kitchen

Pub style menu, where you can eat and drink at the indoor dining room or outside at the picnic table style bar overlooking the lagoon, relax on the patio style couches under the outdoor tin roof or play a game of bocce ball out front. 2000 Oyster Creek Drive, Englewood. 941-460-8999, www.kenandbarbs.com

Mango Bistro

A variety of freshly made specialty foods in a colorful decor with artful gifts and world music. 301 W. Dearborn St., Englewood. 941-681-3500, www.mangobistro.com



FILE PHOTO

Visani is a dinner theater with live music and comedy shows.

Original Word of Mouth

Serving breakfast and lunch as well as fresh baked goods. 115 W. Dearborn St., Englewood. A second location is at 1740 E. Venice Ave., Venice, 941-681-2769, www.originalwordofmouth.com.



FILE PHOTO

Bert's Back Porch at The Twisted Fork can hold about 2,300 people for a big event, making it a versatile venue.



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ATTRACTIONS

Southwest Florida has a variety of attractions to entertain families and adults. These include animal sanctuaries, nature parks, botanical gardens, historic homes and museums.

PUNTA GORDA

Arcadia Opera House: features one of the largest antique collections in the state. 106 W. Oak St., Arcadia. 863-494-9444

Art Center Sarasota: Four galleries exhibiting local, regional, and international artists. 707 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. 941-365-2032

Big Cat Habitat: The large-animal rescue is a permanent home for dozens of exotic animals, offers placement for animals in need, and works to educate the public about animal care and conservation. 7101 Palmer Blvd., Sarasota. 941-371-6377

Bishop Museum of Science and Nature: Engaging exhibits as well as educational programs that interpret the scientific knowledge of Florida, the world, and our universe The Bishop Museum of Science and Nature, 201 10th St W, Bradenton. 941-746-4131

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay: Enjoy wildlife and wild rides. 10165 McKinley Drive, Tampa. <https://buschgardens.com/tampa>.

Calusa Nature Center & Planetarium: A natural history museum with live native and teaching animals, and exhibits about the animals, plants and environment of Southwest Florida. 3450 Ortiz Ave., Fort Myers 239-275-3435



FILE PHOTO
Edison & Ford Winter Estates is the former winter homes of Thomas Edison and Henry Ford. Includes museum and botanical garden. 2350 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers. 239-334-7419.

Devil's Den Spring: is an underground spring inside a dry cave has been home to many extinct animal fossils dating back to the Pleistocene Age. 5390 N.E 180th Ave., Williston. 352-528-3344, www.devilsden.com

Edison & Ford Winter Estates: is the former winter homes of Thomas Edison and Henry Ford. Includes museum and botanical garden. 2350 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers. 239-334-7419.

Fishermen's Village: Waterfront shopping, dining and resort. 1200 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda. 941-639-8721

Florida Aquarium: welcomes visitors to experience a wide variety of aquatic and terrestrial animals with the goal of building awareness and inspiring action for species and habitat conservation. 701 Channelside Drive, Tampa. 813-273-4000.

~ Continued on page 84



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FILE PHOTO

The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall is a half-size replica of Vietnam Wall contains the names of the 58,318 who were killed during the Vietnam War. 200 Harbor Walk Drive, Punta Gorda.



FILE PHOTO

Iguanaland is a reptile zoo, education and conservation Center at 33900 Bermont Road, Punta Gorda. www.iguanaland.com.

Gatorama: Climb into a pool of baby gators as our keeper guides you on the proper way to catch the little critter, alligator/ crocodiles shows, hatching festival, Tortoise and python encounters, 10665 N. U.S. Highway 27, Palmdale. 863-675-0623.

Harborwalk: Multi-use recreational trail. Bicycle rentals available. 400 W. Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda.

Iguanaland: is a reptile zoo, education and conservation Center at 33900 Bermont Road, Punta Gorda. www.iguanaland.com.

IMAG History & Science Center: Interactive exhibits focused on explore science, technology, engineering and math. 2000 Cranford Ave., Fort Myers. 239-243-0043.

J.N. 'Ding' Darling National Wildlife Refuge: The refuge is part of the largest undeveloped mangrove ecosystem in the U.S. It is world famous for its migratory bird populations. 1 Wildlife Drive, Sanibel. 239-472-1100.

John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art: View the permanent collection's treasures, exhibitions from around the world and the

classical sculptures that fill the grand courtyard. This awe-inspiring museum was originally built by famed circus impresario John Ringling as a legacy to the citizens of Florida. 5401 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota. 941-359-5700.

Key West Express: Cruise to Key West, much faster than driving. 1200 Main St., Fort Myers Beach. 239-463-5733.

King Fisher Fleet: Fishing charters, sunset cruises and river tours. 200 W. Retta Esplanade. Punta Gorda. 941-639-0969.

Marie Selby Botanical Garden:- A tropical urban oasis with something for everyone. Relax amidst nature's beauty and allow the scenery of unparalleled botanical bliss to carry you away. 1534 Mound St. Sarasota 941-366-8751

Military Heritage Museum: Military heritage and history of the United States. 900 W. Marion Ave. Punta Gorda 941-575-9002

Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium: Your window into the ocean, featuring more than 100 species of marine animals and showcasing working laboratories where real scientific research happens. 1600 Ken Thompson Parkway, Sarasota. 941-388-4441.

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Naples Botanical Garden: A world class paradise that combines delightful cultivated tropical gardens with beautifully restored natural habitats. 4820 Bayshore Drive, Naples. 239-643-7275.

North Port Art Center: Exhibits, art classes and instruction. 5950 Sam Shapos Way, North Port 941-423-6460.

Octagon Wildlife Sanctuary: is a recovery habitat for abandoned and abused exotic wildlife. 41660 Horseshoe Road, Punta Gorda. 239-543-1130.

Peace River Botanical & Sculpture Gardens: Gardens Year-round blooms are showcased alongside boardwalks, docks and sculptures. 5827 Riverside Drive, Punta Gorda. 941-621-8299.

Peace River Wildlife Center: Wildlife rehabilitation and education center. 400 Ponce de Leon Parkway, Punta Gorda. 941-637-3830.

Railroad Museum of South Florida: The exhibits include a cosmetically restored 1905 Atlantic Coastline Railroad 0-6-0 Baldwin Locomotive and Tender, and a cosmetically restored 1953 Seaboard Airline Railroad Caboose. In addition to the Interpretative Center it operates a one-mile miniature train ride through a 100-foot tunnel, over a trestle bridge and between lakes and wooded areas with views of birds and wildlife. 7330 Gladiolus Drive, Fort Myers. 239-267-1905.

Sarasota Classic Car Museum: Recognized as the second oldest continuously operating antique car museum in the Nation! As you stroll through the museum, travel back in time and into the future of man's greatest invention, the automobile. Antique, exotic, European and one-of-a-kind classics are featured in our rotating exhibits throughout the museum. 5500 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. 941-355-6228.

Sarasota Jungle Gardens: Over 10 acres of botanical plantings along with bird and animal



FILE PHOTO

There are 21 sculptures at the Peace River Botanical and Sculpture Gardens in Punta Gorda.

shows. 3701 Bay Shore Road. Sarasota. 941-355-5305.

Seminole Casino Hotel: Immokalee A Class III tribal gaming casino and hotel 506 S. 1st St., Immokalee. 239-658-1313.

Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa: Entertainment, dining and casino gaming. 5223 Orient Road, Tampa. 866-388-4263.

Seminole Gulf Railway: Murder Mystery Dinner Train All aboard for a one-of-a-kind theatrical and culinary experience. 4110 Center Pointe Drive, Fort Myers. 239-275-6060.

~ Continued on page 86

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FILE PHOTO

Solomon's Castle is a hand-built medieval castle complete with a moat. The sculptor Howard Solomon started building the castle in 1974 out of aluminum printing plates thrown out by the local newspaper. 4533 Solomon Road, Ona. 863-494-6077.



PROVIDED BY OCTAGON WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

The **Octagon Wildlife Sanctuary** is a recovery habitat for abandoned and abused exotic wildlife. 41660 Horseshoe Road, Punta Gorda. 239-543-1130.

Shell Factory and Nature Park: Retail shop, eatery and nature park. 2787 N. Tamiami Trail. Fort Myers. 239-995-2141.

Salvador Dali Museum: Dedicated to the works of Salvador Dalí. It houses the largest collection of Dalí's works outside Europe 1 Dali Blvd., St. Petersburg, 727-823-3767.

Sunken Gardens: This 100-year-old garden is home to some of the oldest tropical plants in the region. 1825 4th St., N. St. Petersburg. 727-893-7111.

The Holocaust Museum & Education Center of Southwest Florida: Artifacts, photos, exhibits and events. 4760 Tamiami Trail N., Naples. 239-263-9200.

The Naples Zoo: A 43-acre zoo and historic botanical garden. 1590 Goodette-Frank Road. Naples. 239-262-5409.

Solomon's Castle: is a hand-built medieval castle complete with a moat. The sculptor Howard Solomon started building the castle in 1974 out of aluminum printing plates thrown out by the local newspaper. 4533 Solomon

Road, Ona. 863-494-6077.

Venice Art Center Exhibits: art classes and instruction. 390 Nokomis Ave., S. Venice. 941-485-7136.

Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall: Half-size replica of Vietnam Wall contains the names of the 58,318 who were killed during the Vietnam War. 200 Harbor Walk Drive, Punta Gorda

Visual Arts Center Exhibits: art classes and instruction. 210 Maud St., Punta Gorda 941-639-8810.

Warm Mineral Springs: Only warm water mineral spring in the state of Florida. 12200 San Servando Ave. North Port. 941-426-1692.

Weeki Wachee Springs State Park: an enchanted spring where you can see live mermaids, take a trip on a river boat cruise, learn about Florida wildlife, and swim in the pristine waters at Buccaneer Bay. You can also embark on a paddling adventure down the pristine waterway of the Weeki Wachee River. 6131 Commercial Way, Spring Hill. 352-597-8484.



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