

BEACH VACATIONS

Posted by: [Jan Ross](#)

Wednesday, September 24, 2014



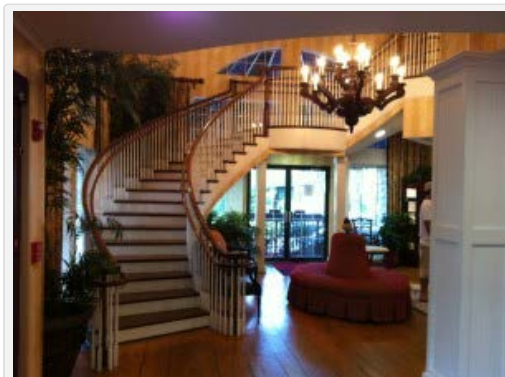
Evening beach view on Amelia Island.

Before we drove to the lovely and historic Amelia Island on the Atlantic coast of Florida, I had never heard of it. Amelia Island is one of the Sea Islands, a chain of barrier islands that reaches along the east coast of the United States all the way from South Carolina to Florida. It's only about 13 miles long and 4 miles wide, but it's a charming place full of beautiful Victorian mansions. It's the only location in the United States to have proudly flown eight different flags and, of course, it has the requisite pirate history of most barrier islands. This place comes by

that claim quite rightly, as the island is located just a short sail from Savannah, which made it quite easy to get rid of all those contraband goods in the big city.

There is no long bridge or causeway to get to Amelia Island; you are just driving along and suddenly you find yourself in the middle of the pretty little historic downtown area of Fernandina Beach, complete with shops and restaurants, many of which look like they have been there a hundred years. And some of them have. Considering how small and walkable the downtown area is, they have managed to cram a large number of wonderful shopping locations there. I spent a couple of afternoons browsing through the shops and can recommend [Twisted Sister](#), a fabulous little shop with clothes, décor, gifts, and great jewelry. I bought bags full of extremely reasonably priced jewelry, especially some with an ocean theme that I adore. If you love shells, you are going to love this place!

One of the best places to stay on the island is [The Hampton Inn and Suites Amelia Island in Fernandina Beach](#). We didn't know what to expect when pulled up to this lovely historic hotel located only about a block from the harbor and a short walk from the shopping district, but we were immediate fans when we stepped into the gorgeous lobby. The lobby is beautifully decorated with hardwood floors, a fireplace, and an incredible staircase winding up to the



Travelhoppers is the best place to start your travel research!

Username:

Password:

Login

Sign Up

[Lost your password?](#)

EUROPE
for Independent
Travelers

Customize:
- flights,
- hotels,
- trains,
- cars,
- tours.

EuropeanDestinations.com [>Book now](#)

Discover
Latin America

Flexible trips for less
Get ready to go in
seconds!

LatinDestinations.com [>Book Now!](#)

next floor; it looks like something from "Gone With the Wind".

Beautiful lobby staircase in the hotel.

We thought the lobby could not be topped, but when we entered our large one bedroom suite, we realized we were wrong! We were amazed to see a completely separate bedroom, a very nice living room, and a complete kitchen. It is the perfect place for a couple or even a family. There is even a nice sized balcony overlooking the town or the harbor, depending on which way your room faces. I spent an afternoon lounging by the marvelous pool, which overlooks the harbor, and we really enjoyed the free Continental breakfast every morning. They even provided a very nice lap desk in the bedroom, which is something I have never seen in any other hotel.



Tickets for our cruise.

Aside from shopping and relaxing in our hotel, one of the most interesting things we did was take a cruise of the area with [Amelia River Cruises](#). We walked down to the harbor and boarded the very comfortable, shaded large boat for the 10:30 a.m. cruise on the Cumberland Harbor. We were excited at the possibility of seeing wildlife along the way, including manatees and wild horses on Cumberland Island. Amelia and Cumberland Island both have rich and interesting histories and the captain/narrator is an expert in telling the stories.

With Fernandina's (the beach area also located on Amelia Island) shrimp boats, historic Old Towne, and Ft. Clinch (an interesting fort from Civil War times), this tour lets you see it all. We actually saw a

quickly submerging manatee but we were even more thrilled to see plenty of wild horses on Cumberland Island. I didn't know there were wild horses on any of the barrier islands except those off the coast of Virginia, but they are plenty on Cumberland Island. The ruins of the Carnegie Dungeoness Mansion on Cumberland were also fascinating and we got a glimpse of the famous, beautiful Greyfield Inn. It's where the Kennedys stayed after John F. Kennedy Jr. was married on Cumberland Island, his childhood favorite place for vacations.

It was time for lunch after our cruise, so we walked back down to the downtown area of Fernandina Beach for lunch on the patio of [Café Karibo](#), where I had a delicious and unique ham and apple sandwich – I recommend it! It was surprisingly pleasant on the patio, even on a warm summer day, as there is often a nice breeze from the harbor.

After relaxing by the quiet and private hotel pool in the afternoon, we drove out to the beautiful beach area of the island. With a wide assortment of both huge and small beach houses and condos, it should be easy to find the perfect rental if you don't want to stay in a hotel. One of the nicest things we noticed is that there is a great deal of public beach access and plenty of free parking, which is very nice in a beach community.

We decided to check out [Sandy Bottoms Beach Bar and Grill](#) (don't you love that name) for dinner and we were so glad we did – it was truly one of the best seafood dinners I have ever eaten and I am a seafood connoisseur! Located right on the beach, you can enjoy a great sunset while consuming some of the best hush puppies I have ever tasted. Seriously, you're going to want a double order!

As we consumed our delicious seafood and watched the sun go down, we marveled over how much we had enjoyed our visit to this fantastic little island – which we previously had never even known



Shrimp boat catching our dinner!

DOWN UNDER ANSWERS
TRAVEL EXPERTS - AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS 800-788-6685

duatravel.com CLICK TO SEE OUR LATEST DEALS

FROM \$529* USD
WEEKLONG VACATION RENTALS WORLDWIDE!
INCLUDES 1- AND 2-BEDROOM CONDOS

LEARN MORE

- accommodations
- Adventure
- Air Travel
- All Inclusive
- Antarctica
- Asia
- Australia and New Zealand
- backpacking
- Beach Vacations
- Biking
- Brazil
- camping
- Caribbean
- clothing optional
- Cruise
- Czech Republic
- Easter Island
- Family Travel
- Festivals
- Food Tours
- gambling
- Gay and Lesbian Travel
- Glamping
- Green Travel
- hiking
- Holiday Travel
- Holland/Flanders
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Las Vegas
- Luxury
- Activities
- Africa
- Albania
- Anguilla
- Aruba
- astronomy
- Austria
- Barbados
- Belgium
- Birdwatching
- California
- Canada
- Central America
- Costa Rica
- Culinary
- Destinations
- Europe
- Features
- Florida
- France
- Garden Tours
- Germany
- greece
- Hawaii
- Historical travel
- Holland
- Honeymoon and Destination Weddings
- India
- Italy
- Lodging
- Mexico

existed!

Now we have shared our secret with you, so head to Amelia Island on your next road trip!

Recommend [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends recommend.

SHARE AND ENJOY!



Tags: , [Amelia Island Florida](#), [Fernandina Beach](#)



For twenty years, I worked as a librarian in an elementary school but finally decided to get serious about travel writing and devote all my time to it. Now, I travel the world and write all about it. I can't imagine a more fabulous or fulfilling job. I write a regular travel column for two regional, Central Kentucky magazines and contribute regularly to other magazines and online travel sites, such as The SavvyGal, A Luxury Travel Blog and

The Vacation Gals. I'm an avid reader and stay active with Yoga, Pilates and Zumba classes. My favorite place in the whole world is a beach - any beach. I have been married for 34 years and my husband is my favorite travel companion. I also rely on him for his excellent photography skills. We have two grown children and the best grandson in the world. Slowly but surely, we are visiting all the places we have dreamed about. Hopefully, the next one will be the one you want to read about!

<http://www.wanderlustwonder.com/>

No comments yet.

[Leave a Reply](#)

You must be **logged in** to post a comment.

Recent Posts

- [Jersey, UK – the real address of bespoke food](#)
- [The Best Kept Secret in Florida: Amelia Island](#)
- [Belgium: Flanders Battlefields](#)
- [The Pet Travel Scheme](#)
- [Stylish, stunning and chic – and now cheap too](#)

Related Posts

1. [Tybee Island, The Best-Kept Secret in Georgia](#)
2. [How to Spend A Day on Catalina Island](#)
3. [Five Fabulous Fall Beach Destinations](#)
4. [Gulf Shores/Orange Beach – the Best Kept Secret in Alabama](#)
5. [Quiet, Beautiful and Family-Friendly: Navarre Beach, Florida](#)

- Middle East
- North America
- Oregon
- Portugal
- rafting
- River Cruises
- RV travel
- Scotland
- shopping
- South America
- Spiritual Travel
- Texas
- The Journey
- Travel Hippy
- Troubleshooter
- Uncategorized
- United States
- Virgin Islands
- Wild Life
- Nevada
- North Carolina
- Planning
- Quebec
- Rail Travel
- Romance
- safari
- scuba
- Solo Travel
- Spain
- Style
- The Armchair
- Travel Agents
- Travel IQ
- Turkey
- United Kingdom
- Vietnam
- voluntourism
- Wine Tours



Syndicate

Subscribe to this site's RSS feed.

