

# News

## **WHAT'S NEW FOR 2018 IN NAPLES, MARCO ISLAND AND THE EVERGLADES** ***Florida's Paradise Coast tempts visitors with renovated hotels, cultural exhibits,*** ***and a growing dining scene***

(January, 2018) - Renovated beach resorts top the list of what's new in the Naples, Marco Island and the Everglades region of Southwest Florida. Visitors will enjoy exploring the expanding dining and craft cocktail and beer scenes as well as special exhibits at top area attractions.

### ***Renovated Hotels Transform Guest Experience***

The Marco Island Marriott Beach Resort rebranded as the [JW Marriott Marco Island Beach Resort](#) on January 1, 2017 after a \$320 million renovation that will continue through early 2018. The resort now features 716 newly renovated and enhanced guestrooms, new dining options, a reimagined lobby, and the amenities and service standards befitting a JW Marriott. Work is nearing completion on the new adults-only Lanai Tower featuring 94 new and luxurious guest rooms, a chef-driven restaurant, rooftop lounge, new meeting space featuring stunning beach and Gulf views, a luxurious new pool deck, and a virtual entertainment centre. Event function space opens March 21, followed by the opening of the virtual entertainment centre in June, with guestroom openings to follow, bringing the resort's total guestroom total to 810.

Also opening in March 2018 on the beach at Marco Island are the fully renovated and reimagined guestrooms at [Hilton Marco Island Beach Resort & Spa](#). A full renovation project was underway prior to Hurricane Irma. Guests currently have access to the newly renovated meeting and event space and The Deck at 560 Restaurant & Bar, which is open daily for lunch and dinner with an all-day Happy Hour.

[Marco Beach Ocean Resort](#) has completed a comprehensive renovation of its one- and two-bedroom suites and has updated the resort's Gulf Ballroom and pool furniture. Each of the resorts 77 one-bedroom and 16 two-bedroom suites offers a kitchenette, spacious living room and private balcony overlooking the Gulf of Mexico or lush garden terraces. Meanwhile, signature restaurant Sale e Pepe has once again been awarded AAA Four Diamond status.

[LaPlaya Beach & Golf Resort](#) reopened to guests after an \$8 million renovation when it reopened for guests on November 17 after a two-month closure due to Hurricane Irma. The transformation includes luxurious new guest rooms in the Gulf Tower, a reinvigorated lobby, and a stunning new look for award-winning signature restaurant, BALEEN.

[Naples Grande Beach Resort](#) reopened on December 15th, following a three-and-a-half-month closure due to Hurricane Irma. The independent, luxury resort had a multimillion-dollar refresh that is reflected in its guestrooms, public spaces, pools and lush outdoor landscaping. The 474-room property is set on 23 waterfront acres adjoined by a pristine 200-acre nature preserve and mangrove estuary that embodies a quintessential southwest Florida experience.

[The Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club](#) has completed a total redesign of the AAA Four-Diamond beachfront resort's historic golf course. The redesign was done with input from golf icon and acclaimed course designer Jack Nicklaus in collaboration with noted course architect John Sanford. The course is open for public play as well as for resort guests. This major \$9 million project follows \$50 million in impressive renovations and enhancements at the resort over the last few years.

### **Special Exhibits at Area's Top Attractions**

Visitors to Naples Zoo at Caribbean Gardens are welcomed by the pitter-patter of tiny webbed feet with the debut of '[Penguins in Paradise](#)' featuring four African penguins. 'Penguins in Paradise' is a seasonal travelling exhibit on display until April 15, 2018. This will be the first time that penguins will have ever been on exhibit at Naples Zoo. Unlike their cousins in Antarctica, this African species thrive in a subtropical climate like that of sunny Naples, Florida. The special exhibit is included in regular zoo admission.

Dinosaurs inhabit Naples Botanical Garden February 17-June 3, 2018. The [Dinosaurs: Back With a Roar!](#) multi-sensory exhibit features life-sized replicas that move and growl, including an 85-foot Brachiosaurus and a 40-foot Tyrannosaurus Rex. This dynamic and interactive dinosaur exhibit is both educational and entertaining for the entire family and is included with regular garden admission.

### **Recent Destination Awards & Accolades**

Visitors to Florida's Paradise Coast will find it easy to create a healthy and very happy holiday experience. The area has received numerous recent recognitions as a top destination for health, happiness, outdoor adventure and quality of life.

The Naples, Marco Island, Immokalee metropolitan area is ranked the #1 Happiest Healthiest City in the United States in 2017 for the second consecutive year by the Gallup-Healthways State of the American Well-Being Community Rankings.

The area is also ranked #11 in "The 25 Happiest Cities in the United States" in the National Geographic/Blue Zones Index.

### **Culinary Scene**

[Naples Restaurant Week](#) is a semi-annual promotion that celebrates fine dining and the wide array of cuisines available for an affordable price in the greater Naples area. The Spring Edition kicks off May 31-June 13 with participating restaurants offering three-course price-fixed dinner menus with special upgrades and deals starting at \$25 and \$35.

### **New Openings**

The newest restaurant from Vincenzo Betulia, an award-winning and locally popular chef who is a leader in the Southwest Florida culinary evolution, pays homage to turn of the century Parisian brasseries with his third Fifth Avenue restaurant, [The French](#). Diners enjoy classic country and coastal French dishes in a bustling, vibrant atmosphere with a romantic, street-side setting.

The family-owned [Pinchers](#), which serves only the freshest fish, shellfish and crab from Southwest Florida waters has opened its second restaurant in Florida's Paradise Coast. The new location is at the Marco Walk Plaza on Marco Island.

[True Food Kitchen](#), a partnership between Fox Restaurant Concepts founder Sam Fox and integrative medicine expert Dr. Andrew Weil, is now open in Naples at Waterside Shops. Inspired by the principles of Dr. Andrew Weil's anti-inflammatory diet, True Food Kitchen merges nutrient-rich ingredients with a flavour-forward menu.

Other restaurants coming soon in 2018 to Naples include Sails, featuring a menu with a northern Mediterranean flair including a raw bar and a full brunch on Sundays, located at the west end of Fifth Avenue South; and Fishers, an authentic fish and chips restaurant opening in partnership with Alan Fisher of the famed Fishers Fish & Chips in London.

Craft cocktails are mixed and poured at area hotspots including Bar Tulia, The Continental and The Bevy in downtown Naples. Visitors are joining locals at the area's top spots for craft beer including Bone Hook Brewing, Naples Beach Brewery, Riptide Brewery and more.

### **About Florida's Paradise Coast**

Whether travellers are looking for a romantic escape or family getaway, Florida's [Paradise Coast](#) — Naples, Marco Island and the western portion of the Everglades — has an array of holiday options year-round. With more than 30 miles of soft, white sand beaches, a thriving art and culture scene, distinctive dining, family attractions and the best of outdoor adventure, the Paradise Coast is truly a destination with it all. Located just two hours from Miami, four hours from Orlando and three hours from Tampa, the Paradise Coast is easily accessible from some of Florida's largest cities. Travellers outside of the Sunshine State can fly into Southwest Florida International Airport, which provides nonstop service to 49 destinations on 15 different air carriers. For more information about the Paradise Coast, visit <http://www.paradisecoast.co.uk>. Follow the destination on Twitter @paradisecoastuk and #ParadiseCoast and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Paradise-Coast-UK-400213546659311/>

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