

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Destin, Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa Island: What's New in 2018**

*New amusements, accommodations, restaurants, groups & meeting space*

**DESTIN-FORT WALTON BEACH-OKALOOSA ISLAND, Fla.** – Okaloosa County is the perfect place to create lifelong memories. There's always something happening on the sugar-white shores, and there's something for everyone. No matter what time of the year they come, visitors can expect amazing days on the beautiful emerald-green waters, delicious local fare in its restaurants, and events that offer the opportunity for families to connect and have fun.

Now, visitors to Destin, Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa Island have a lot more to look forward to in 2018. Along with enjoying world-class fishing, sugar-white beaches, fresh local seafood and championship golf courses, visitors will enjoy new amusements, accommodations, restaurants, groups and meeting spaces, and more. New additions to the Emerald Coast coming in 2018 include:

Accommodations

*Candlewood Suites*

Candlewood Suites is joining an exciting lineup of hotel accommodations in Fort Walton Beach. The 3-story hotel will offer 98 rooms located just west of downtown on Highway 98

*Holiday Inn Express*

Also expected to open in 2018 is the Holiday Inn Express. This 4-story hotel featuring 95 rooms will offer guests a wonderful location near downtown Fort Walton Beach and the beautiful beaches of Okaloosa Island.

Groups & Meeting Space

*The Emerald Coast Convention Center*

The recently remodeled Emerald Coast Convention Center saw \$465,000 worth of renovations completed in January. Inside the Convention Center, you'll find 35,000 square feet of flexible, ideal meeting and event space featuring the latest improvements, which include carpet throughout the facility, 2,000 new chairs, an equipment-charging station, new interior paint and upgraded audio/visual equipment.

Restaurants

*Cuvee Kitchen & Wine Bar*

From the innovative minds that brought Destin Jackacuda's Seafood and Sushi, and Brotula's Seafood House & Steamer comes Cuvee Kitchen and Wine Bar. The name

'Cuvee' is not new in Destin, but this incarnation certainly is! Located in what was previously known as Chef Tim Creehan's Cuvee Bistro, this new and updated restaurant features a seasonal, handcrafted menu, premium seafood and farm fresh ingredients.

#### *Half Shell Oyster House*

Known for serving up local Gulf oysters, the Half Shell Oyster House is the newest seafood addition to the Emerald Coast. If oysters aren't for you, don't worry; you can also choose from fish, shrimp and even lobster. Land lovers will enjoy their sumptuous steaks, as well as pasta offerings. There's even a gluten free menu!

#### *Bella Sera Bistro*

Featuring expansive views of the Destin harbor, as well as an incredible wine list, Bella Sera Bistro is the newest restaurant to open at Harborwalk Village. Located just above Crab Island Cantina, here you can enjoy a decadent meal before taking a stroll along the harbor and delighting in the many activities and events of the village.

#### Attractions

##### *Wild Willy's Adventure Zone – Expansion*

You already know and love Wild Willy's Adventure Zone on Okaloosa Island. With its ropes course, mini-golf, arcade and yummy yogurt and pizza shops, it's a one-stop shop for family fun during an Emerald Coast vacation in Fort Walton Beach. But, they aren't stopping there. Slated to open by October 2018, the expanded area of Wild Willy's will offer a variety of expanded attractions such as two go-cart tracks, bumper boats, merry-go-round and even a maze!

#### **ABOUT DESTIN, FORT WALTON BEACH AND OKALOOSA ISLAND**

<http://www.emeraldcoastfl.com>

Discover the sugar-white sand and emerald-green water of Destin, Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa Island, Florida. Enjoy more than 20 miles of pristine beaches, Gulf-to-Table seafood, abundant watersport activities, championship golf, lively nightlife, and numerous attractions designed to thrill all ages. Plus, open-air shopping, nature parks and preserves, annual festivals and events year-round, there's truly something fun for everyone. Known as the "World's Luckiest Fishing Village," Destin is the perfect place for anglers of any skill level to drop a line. Indulge in fresh, local dining at its best with delicious seafood caught straight from the Gulf only hours before it reaches the plate. The destination is an outdoor recreation mecca offering snorkeling and diving, legendary fishing, and boating any adventurer will enjoy. With eight gorgeous golf courses in the area, nothing beats teeing off in paradise. Thanks to its unique sugar-white sand that squeaks beneath your feet and the iconic, calm emerald-green water, the area is known as the Heart of Florida's Emerald Coast. Whether it's lounging on one of our world-renowned beaches or unwinding at an area spa, nowhere else in the world

gives visitors the freedom to lose themselves and completely relax quite like Destin, Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa Island. The Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport (VPS) offers nonstop flights from 21 cities across the U.S., making it quick and easy to hit the tranquil beaches of the Heart of Florida's Emerald Coast!

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/floridasemeraldcoast](https://facebook.com/floridasemeraldcoast)

**Twitter:** [@EmeraldCoastFLA](https://twitter.com/EmeraldCoastFLA)

**Pinterest:** [pinterest.com/emeraldcoastfla](https://pinterest.com/emeraldcoastfla)

**Instagram:** [@EmeraldCoastFLA](https://instagram.com/EmeraldCoastFLA)

###