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**MEDIA CONTACT**

Nicole Stacey  
(850) 434-2142  
[nstacey@visitpensacola.com](mailto:nstacey@visitpensacola.com)

## **Pensacola, FL Florida's Original Getaway Since 1559**

Pensacola, Fla. — When people think about Florida vacations, they typically think of Disney World, Miami Beach or The Keys. But if you truly want to experience the Sunshine state, make plans to visit Pensacola, where you can explore stunning yet uncrowded beaches, amazing food, sensational attractions and 450 years of rich history and culture. Come discover authentic experiences that you'll treasure forever.

Pensacola is more than a pretty face. She's a city with a past, one that stretches back more than 450 years when Spanish explorer Don Tristán de Luna y Arellano was lured to her pristine shores in 1559 and established Pensacola as the first European settlement in North America.

Today, as in the past, visitors from all over the world are enticed by Pensacola's gorgeous sugar-white beaches and emerald green water. Once here, however, many find themselves captivated by her history, culture and diverse heritage.

Visit Pensacola invites travelers to step back in time and explore more than 450 years of history within just a few square blocks of Downtown Pensacola.

Andrew Jackson lived here for years while he was busy winning Florida back from the Spanish. On July 17, 1821, at the site of today's Ferdinand Plaza in Downtown Pensacola, Spain ceded Florida to the United States. Gen. Jackson made a speech to the townspeople declaring Pensacola as the capital of the Florida Territory. He was then sworn in as Florida's first governor at the site.

Stroll through Historic Downtown Pensacola: from the eclectic eateries and shops on Palafox Street, named one of the "10 Great Streets in America" by the American Planning Association; to Historic Pensacola Village, where guides in colonial-era costumes bring history to life with reenactments and demonstrations; to the historic Belmont-DeVilliers district, the heart of the African-American community, once known as the "Harlem of the South." Pensacola celebrates its vibrant history, culture, music and cuisine year-round.

The Pensacola Bay Area is known for its beaches, which are ranked among the best in the country. In 2017, Pensacola Beach was voted the 'Most Beautiful Place in the State' by Conde Nast Traveler and *TripAdvisor's* 'Top 10 Beach in the U.S.' These accolades come as no surprise considering our sugar white sand beaches and crystal-clear waters.

Johnson Beach on Perdido Key offers the unspoiled nature of the Old World. Enjoy the simple pleasures there — secluded stretches of beach, scenic nature trails, and preserves brimming with wildlife.

Pensacola Beach makes a bit more of a splash. Indulge yourself with upscale shopping and spa treatments at a gulf-front resort. Charter a boat for sailing, sports fishing or scuba diving, or try jet skiing or parasailing. Take the kids down to the beach for some swimming and snorkeling, or hike the Footprints in the Sand Eco Trail, an interactive way to learn about local plants and wildlife.

History, beaches and now the yummy stuff. We've got it all. The Pensacola Bay Area offers mouthwatering options for every taste, every occasion, and every mood. From premier chefs in award-winning restaurants to hot new culinary artists in food trucks, we are passionate about food. Whether your idea of a great meal is classic cuisine or fresh seafood on the deck in your flip-flops, you'll find a dining experience beloved by locals and visitors alike. Dig into familiar favorites like shrimp and grits, surf-and-turf, sushi, and pub fare and discover exciting new flavors like



downhome coastal Southern cooking, spicy Cajun soul food, and fusion cuisines. It's all here, and it's all delicious. For those who like to cook, our local seafood and farmer's markets offer fresh, organic ingredients to create your own delicacies. Plus, year-round food festivals, like the Pensacola Seafood Festival, Crawfish Festival and Taste of the Beach, are a great way to sample a variety of local cuisines.

For more excitement, head over to the award-winning Blue Wahoos Stadium to catch some Double-A baseball or college football on the bay. Let your inner child out and have some fun at amusement and water parks, or try your hand at canoeing, kayaking or tubing. Explore a vibrant arts scene with galleries, museums and live performances, or join a hands-on class at the First City Art Center. Don't miss out on our area's #1 attraction, the National Naval Aviation Museum, aboard Pensacola Naval Air Station - the Cradle of Aviation. Named one of the "Top Museums in the U.S." by both *TripAdvisor* and Yelp, this museum is not to miss. With nearly 350,000 square feet of space offering more than 150 immaculately-restored aircraft, plus exhibits, flight simulators, a restaurant and a giant screen theater — it's the world's largest museum of its kind and a fan favorite. It's also the home base for the world-famous Blue Angels Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron. To get the best view, climb to the top of the Pensacola Lighthouse & Museum.

The Pensacola Bay Area is an ideal vacation destination for everyone from romantic couples to boisterous families. So, when it's time to get away, head to [VisitPensacola.com](http://VisitPensacola.com), download your free Vacation Guide, and experience Florida's original getaway since 1559.

#### **About Visit Pensacola**

Visit Pensacola is the destination management organization for Escambia County which includes Pensacola, Pensacola Beach, and Perdido Key. With over 450 years of rich history and 18 miles of sugar-white sand beaches bordered by the emerald-green waters of the Gulf of Mexico, visitors from all over the world are lured to our pristine shores every year. Visit Pensacola supports the community vision of tourism by serving as the central body responsible for building tourism as an economic engine for our community through leadership, connection, collaboration, and communication.