

Travel News & Notes

The Florida Keys Deliver Experiences Unlike Anywhere Else

(NAPSA)—The most significant worldwide travel trend today is individuals' desire for experiential travel.

Gone is the era of ticking destinations off a "bucket list"; today's traveler seeks personally transformative encounters with people and places that bring deeper meaning and lifelong memories to a vacation.

The Florida Keys & Key West abound in unique experiences that can be found "Only in the Keys" throughout the 125-mile-long island chain.

On a drive down the famed Overseas Highway from Key Largo to Key West you'll enjoy the distinctive character of individual islands.

In Key Largo, take a 90-minute canal cruise on the *African Queen*, the original vessel from the 1951 film starring Humphrey Bogart and Katharine Hepburn. A registered national historic site, the boat looks much as it did on the silver screen.

For a "hook and cook" experience in Islamorada, book a charter in the Sport-fishing Capital of the World for exhilarating offshore, reef or backcountry fishing—then take your catch to a local restaurant to be prepared according to a signature local recipe.

Encounter rescued sea turtles during a behind-the-scenes tour of the planet's first licensed veterinary hospital for turtles. Located in Marathon, The Turtle Hospital rescues and rehabilitates sick and injured turtles and, whenever possible, releases them back into the ocean.

West of Marathon, you'll drive across the landmark Seven Mile Bridge, one of the world's longest segmental bridges



Credit: Bob Care, Florida Keys News Bureau

The Turtle Hospital staff releases a rehabilitated loggerhead sea turtle in Marathon in the Florida Keys.

and the centerpiece of the iconic Florida Keys Overseas Highway.

Discover tiny Key deer on Big Pine Key. Endangered Key deer live only in the Lower Keys and can be spotted grazing during early morning and at dusk. The 9,000-acre National Key Deer Refuge was established in 1957 to protect the diminutive deer and other indigenous wildlife.

In Key West, explore history with former President Harry Truman and author Ernest Hemingway. The Harry S. Truman Little White House Museum is Florida's only presidential museum. The Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum is where the writer lived and wrote masterpieces in the 1930s. Be sure to pet a descendant of Hemingway's six-toed cat.

Finally, take a selfie just 90 miles from Cuba at Key West's red, black and yellow Southernmost Point marker that denotes the southernmost land mass in the continental United States.

For more information about the Florida Keys & Key West, visit fla-keys.com.