

florida travel

LIFESTYLES

Charlotte. Lee. Collier Counties.



COURTESY OF CHARLOTTE HARBOR CVB

It all depends on how you like to spend your free time. If watching sunsets on the beach - shopping in exclusive boutiques and admiring a plethora of artisan originals appeals to you - you may want to consider relocating to Florida's Southwest coast.

JUST THE FACTS

Southwest Florida Prime Working Age (20-54 years)

Charlotte County - 50,653 • Lee County - 257,802 • Collier County - 137,091

Median Home Price - Fort Myers/Cape Coral - \$94,900 • Median Home Price - Punta Gorda - \$152,200

Median Home Price - Marco Island - \$200,000

Did you know?

Swamp Buggy Races are held every January, March and October at the Florida Sports Park in Naples.

>> THE INS & OUTS

Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW), Southeast of Fort Myers, serves Lee, Charlotte and Collier Counties. Opened in 1983, it's the central gateway to Southwest Florida for most major domestic carriers and several international charter operations.

The Charlotte County Airport can accommodate various aircraft including larger corporate jets.

Major access roads in and around Southwest Florida include Interstate 75 and U.S. 41 north-south and Alligator Alley and U.S. 41 east-west (east of Naples).

>> OVERVIEW

Charlotte County's land area covers approximately 694 miles on Florida's Southwest coast. Included in Charlotte County's boundaries are the City of Punta Gorda and several towns, such as Port Charlotte, Englewood, Harbour Heights, Gulf Cove and Rotonda. Established in 1921, Charlotte County offers a setting that is both business-hospitable and family-friendly. While Charlotte County boasts an unhurried, unspoiled and undeniably beautiful environment, its greatest assets are unparalleled quality of life and unequaled business opportunities.

A little further South, Lee County is home to eight vibrant cities - Fort Myers, Bonita Springs, Fort Myers Beach, Lehigh Acres, North Fort Myers, Cape Coral, South Fort Myers and Sanibel. Known as Florida's tropical island getaway, it's in Lee County where Floridians living in more congested areas of the state can visit for a feel of old Florida that no longer exists in many areas. In addition to the beautiful natural environment, active residents will find an abundance of golf, tennis and water-sports.

Today, approximately 515,000 people live year-round in Lee County. While the area has grown in contemporary fashion, it still offers many homes, archeological sites and attractions of historical significance and timeless appeal.

Collier County, the largest county in the State of Florida and the most diverse, features a total area of 2,305 square miles and includes the cities of Naples, Marco Island and Everglades City. At least 80 percent of Collier County is set aside as preserve lands, including Big Cypress National Preserve, Everglades National Park, two national wildlife refuges, one national research reserve, three state parks, one state forest and many county,



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city and private parks and nature preserves.

For those who prefer city living, Downtown Naples Fifth Avenue South and Third Street South shopping districts are renowned for their unique boutiques offering fashion, gifts and fine art. For cultural offerings, Collier County provides its residents with at least 134 art galleries, a world class Philharmonic Center for the Arts and the Naples Museum of Art. For the sports enthusiast, Naples is known as the Golf Capital of the World with the second highest golf holes per capita in the United States.

>> INDUSTRY

Some 600+ technology businesses call this region home, as do many retail, tourism and healthcare industry outfits. Florida Gulf Coast University and the emerging Florida Gulf Coast Technology and Research Park, are drawing new businesses to the area, and providing existing firms with the resources they need to innovate and grow.

Charlotte County offers a Qualified Target Industry (QTI) Tax Refund to encourage quality job growth in targeted high value-added businesses. New or expanding businesses, serving multi-state and/or international markets, in targeted industries or designated corporate headquarters are eligible for this refund. Pre-approved applicants who create new jobs in Charlotte County, paying 115 percent of the average annual area wage, can receive tax refunds up to \$3,000 per new job created, up to \$6,000 in an Enterprise Zone or Rural County. Additional "per job" bonuses are available for businesses paying 150 or 200 percent of the average annual area wage.

Lee County launched a \$25 million cash incentive for expanding and relocating businesses in its area. Announcing the FIRST (Financial Incentives for Recruiting Strategic Targets) Initiative in December 2008, Lee County Economic Development Office focuses on companies that will operate within a target industry or high-impact sector; create at least 75 new full-time equivalent jobs within a three-year period, and make a cumulative capital investment in an amount equal to or greater than the award amount.

Collier County is one of the fastest growing areas in the country and continues to have one of the strongest economies in the State of Florida, with one of the lowest unemployment rates, highest rates of job creation and average wages in the



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800-388-2311 | www.remax-oftheislands.com

Considered one of the top 10 community theater groups in the U.S., **The Naples Players** entertains residents and visitors of all ages with their musical, comedy and dramatic arts. In addition to their main stage and cutting edge studio theatre, Naples Players features KidzAct Youth Theatre, with productions like Willie Wonka Junior and Antigone.

Upcoming performances during the Summer 2009, include Thoroughly Modern Millie, a high-spirited musical romp set in the roaring 20s.

For information or reservations, call the box office or visit their Website.

239-263-7990 | www.naplesplayers.com



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The academy, which is located at the former Naples Bath & Tennis Club, features 37 clay courts, state of the art fitness center, complete boarding facilities and a staff directed by top Spanish, US and International coaches, all trained under the Academia Sanchez-Casal system and philosophy.

In addition to the club's annual residence program, players of all skill levels are invited to participate in comprehensive training programs including summer only, adult and coaching.

800-225-9692 | www.tennispaples.com

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Known for its family-friendly shores and abundance of activity, [Sunstream Hotels & Resorts](#) are synonymous

with luxury vacation rentals and unsurpassable service. Honored with numerous civic and commerce awards in Southwest Florida, Sunstream team members are consistently singled out in the annual "E-Awards" presented by the Lee County Visitor and Convention Bureau to local hospitality employees who exemplify service excellence. Call or visit their Website for a complete listing of available vacation properties.

239-765-4111 | www.sunstream.com

Travelers wanting a practical hotel that provides state-of-the-art business services and is located in the heart of Southwest Florida, will find all the comforts of home at the [Hampton Inn & Suites Fort Myers-Colonial Boulevard](#). From the moment guests wake up they can enjoy a complimentary hot breakfast, convenient and thoughtful amenities including those handy extras - that turn an ordinary hotel stay into an extraordinary one. Outdoors, hotel guests can enjoy an onsite pool and sundeck, fitness center and nearby shopping and dining.

239-931-5300 | www.fortmyerscolonialsuites.hamptoninn.com

Visitors are encouraged to make the most of their Southwest Florida vacations by incorporating as many entities into one getaway that you can. At the [Cove Inn](#), Naples, travelers can enjoy the conveniences of an in-room refrigerator and microwave, in addition to the abundance of outdoor activity and amenities.

Guestrooms, which are individually owned, feature a spacious balcony. Water views are available.

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