

FORT PIERCE

A Water Lover's Paradise

Springtime in Fort Pierce, Florida offers countless opportunities for beach goers and water enthusiasts.

From a relaxed kayak ride along the shores of the Fort Pierce waterway to a Gulf stream sportfishing adventure, our tropical climate provides a saltwater paradise for all who wish to enjoy the natural beauty of Florida's 'saltwater fortune.'

Fort Pierce Inlet State Park provides easy access to several lovely beaches in our area where bathers, skim boarders and surfers all benefit from attentive lifeguards monitoring their safety while soaking up some vitamin D on our south Atlantic Coast. Take surfing lessons with qualified instructors from locally owned and operated Spunky's Surf Shop or locally operated Center Florida Surfing School and catch our inlet's best swells.

For the more adventuresome, both wind sailing and kite boarding offer a breathtaking thrill for partic-

ipants and onlookers alike. And with off-shore reefs 100 yards from shore, snorkeling and scuba enthusiasts can begin their dives right from our beaches. Visit our website, www.visitstluciefla.com, for a list of dive sites.

For a 'toned down' day on the water (and in the shade!), The Manatee Observation and Education Center, just north of the Fort Pierce City Marina, offers pontoon boat tours by captains and mates who are well versed in the intricacies of the waterways and local wildlife and flora. Bottle-nosed dolphin, manatees and prolific bird aggregations are only some of the sights to see. On these tours Florida Ospreys (having made an incredible comeback after those dastardly days of DDT), are seen diving to the water's surface and back to the sky with a tasty mullet in their talons on a regular basis.





Boat rentals of all varieties are scattered along our waterways. Canoes, kayaks, small motor boats, and various sizes of sailing craft are all available for a day out in the Florida sunshine. Although some of these watercraft can be accessed through local marinas, you can also contact a local tour group where professional guides run kayak and canoe trips to delightfully scenic areas of the Indian River Lagoon that are 'off the beaten path.' The best part of this is that you just bring your lunch, show up and paddle—but don't worry about hauling a canoe around. They will handle the logistics while you enjoy the scenery.

No description of our local waters would be complete without mentioning our fabulous saltwater fishing. It's as simple as fishing off a dock or as sophisticated as hiring a professional guide to show you the secret spots. The fishing along the Fort Pierce waterway and corresponding offshore waters is exceptional. Anglers from across the country travel here to enjoy the snook, redfish, trout and tarpon fishing in the lagoon, pompano fishing off the beach, and the offshore fishing for dol-



phin, wahoo, cobia, amberjack and sailfish. It's as good as it gets anywhere on the east coast of the U.S.!

This fishing is best accessed by contacting a local tackle shop or marina for a list of reputable guides or captains who will provide you with a fishing day to remember and the photos to prove it!

Enjoy the beauty and magnificence of our Fort Pierce waterway and offshore waters in a multitude of ways. Pick the ones that suit your needs and enjoy a relaxing day on the water.

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Greg Gardner/Indian River Magazine*

St. Lucie County Tourist Development Council
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