

# Free LOCAL AREA Guide

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## Monroe County, FL



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**Stress Reduction:** Nature has a calming effect on the mind and body, helping to reduce stress levels. The peaceful surroundings, fresh air, and natural beauty can lower cortisol levels, decrease heart rate, and promote relaxation.

**Improved Mental Health:** Being in nature is associated with improved mood and mental health. Studies have shown that spending time outdoors can reduce symptoms of anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders. Nature provides a sense of tranquility and perspective, which can help alleviate negative thoughts and emotions.

**Increased Physical Activity:** Nature encourages physical activity, whether it's hiking, biking, walking, or simply exploring outdoor spaces. Engaging in outdoor activities promotes exercise, which is essential for maintaining physical health and fitness. Additionally, being in nature often involves exposure to sunlight, which helps the body produce vitamin D and supports overall well-being.

**Enhanced Creativity & Cognitive Function:** Nature stimulates creativity and cognitive function. Research suggests that spending time in natural environments can improve problem-solving skills, boost creativity, and enhance concentration and focus. Nature provides a rich sensory experience that activates different parts of the brain, fostering cognitive development and innovation.

**Connection with the Environment:** Spending time in nature fosters a deeper connection with the environment and promotes environmental stewardship. When people experience the beauty and wonder of nature firsthand, they are more likely to develop a sense of appreciation and respect for the natural world. This connection can lead to greater awareness of environmental issues and a desire to protect and preserve natural habitats for future generations.

**Overall, being in nature offers a multitude of benefits for both physical and mental well-being, making it essential for maintaining a healthy and balanced lifestyle.**



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Monroe County



Scan the QR Code to  
go to the county page.

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| Airport / Key West International..... | 305-809-5300 |
| Attorney.....                         | 305-292-3470 |
| Building & Permitting.....            | 305-289-2521 |
| Clerk of Court / Comptroller          |              |
| Key West.....                         | 305-292-3458 |
| Marathon.....                         | 305-289-6027 |
| Plantation Key.....                   | 305-852-7145 |
| Code Compliance.....                  | 305-453-8806 |
| Emergency.....                        | 911          |
| Emergency Management.....             | 800-955-5504 |
| Engineering, Roads & Bridges.....     | 305-295-4390 |
| Extension Services.....               | 305-292-4501 |
| Facilities Maintenance.....           | 305-295-4385 |
| Fire Rescue.....                      | 305-289-6004 |
| Information Technology.....           | 305-295-5110 |
| Library.....                          | 305-292-3595 |
| Planning & Environmental Resources    |              |
| Key Largo.....                        | 305-453-8800 |
| Marathon.....                         | 305-289-2500 |
| Ocean Reef.....                       | 305-453-8765 |
| Parks & Beaches.....                  | 305-453-8748 |
| Public Information.....               | 305-680-8226 |
| Social Services.....                  | 305-292-4408 |
| Sheriff.....                          | 305-289-2351 |
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Annual Election Period, for Medicare, starts 10/15/2024 and lasts up to 12/07/2024. This year there are changes that you need to be aware of. Concurrently, the Open Enrollment Period for Obamacare in the under 65 market starts on 10/01/2024 for Off Marketplace members and on 11/21/24 to 01/15/25, for In Marketplace members who are looking for subsidies. Like Medicare, this year the Marketplace also requires your attention to some changes.

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# Local Area Events

## YEAR ROUND

- Morada way 3rd Thursday Art Walk - Florida Keys
- Sheriffs animal farm open house 2nd & 4th Sundays - Lower Keys
- Truman Waterfront Farmers Market - Thursdays - Key West

## JANUARY

- 1st Day Hike & Trail Clean Up - Islamorada
- Annual Family Fun Night - Marathon
- Annual Florida Keys Seafood Festival - Key West
- Annual Island Boat Show - Marathon
- Art Guild of the Purple Islands Judged Art Show - Islamorada - thru March
- Baygrass Bluegrass Festival - Islamorada
- BPW Keysino Night - Marathon
- Cirque Ma'Ceo - Lower Keys
- Coral Head Music Fest - Marathon
- Florida Keys Celtic Festival
- Islamorada Bartenders Sailfish Open
- Islamorada Reggae Festival
- Islamorada Sail Fly Tournament
- Island Boat Show - Islamorada
- January Jamboree / Garden Club - Marathon
- Key West Craft Show
- Key West Food & Wine Festival
- Key West Half Marathon & Runfest
- Key West House & Garden Tours
- Key Western Fest - thru February
- Paws for A Cause Dog Walk on the Old Seven Mile Bridge - Marathon
- RokIsland Fest - Key West
- Spanish Fly Music Festival - Lower Keys
- Tropical Impressions Art Show - Lower Keys
- Wounded Warrior Project Soldier Ride - Florida Keys
- Yachting Race Week - Key West

## FEBRUARY

- Annual FKSPCA Pup Crawl - Key West
- Annual Local Arts Show - Lower Keys
- Annual Run w/ Deer 5K Run & Walk - Lower Keys
- Civil War Days - Key West
- International Womens & Girls Flag Football - Key West

## FEBRUARY (CONTD)

- Key West Home Tours
- Old Island Days Art Festival - Key West
- Old Wooden Bridge Kids Fishing Tournament - Lower Keys
- Sombrero Beach Run Weekend - Marathon
- Steampunk Pirate Ball - Key West
- Valentines Day Celebrations - Key West
- Winter Star Party- Lower Keys

## MARCH

- Annual Conch Shell Blowing Contest - Key West
- Annual K-A-I-R Sombrero Beach Run - Marathon
- Annual Key Colony Beach Day - Marathon
- Annual Marathon Seafood Festival
- FKSPCA Spring Social - Key West
- Florida Keys Watercolor Society Art Show - Marathon
- Garden Club House & Garden Tours - Marathon
- Habitat for Humanity Annual Cocktail Party - Islamorada
- Irish Kevin's 5K / 10K Shamrock Shuffle
- Islandfest Featuring the Taste of Islamorada
- Islamorada Spring Fest
- Key Colony Beach St. Patricks Day Parade - Marathon
- Key Largo Community Park Easter Egg Hunt
- Key West Outdoor Movies at Fort East Martello - Key West
- Marathon Garden Club House & Garden Tour
- Monroe County Fire Rescue Easter Egg Hunt - Lower Keys
- Oscar Parties at the Bars - Key West
- Pink St. Paddys Day Celebration & March - Key West
- Sculpture Key West
- St. Paddys Island Run 5K/10K - Islamorada
- Taste of Key West
- Tennessee Williams Festival - Key West
- Upper Keys Irish Festival - Key Largo

## APRIL

- 7 Mile Offshore Grand Prix - Marathon
- Afro Roots Fest - Islamorada
- Annual Drag Races & Bed Races - Key West
- Annual Relay for Life MAIn Event - Marathon
- Annual Seven Mile Bridge Run - Marathon
- Bahia Honda State Park Earth Day Celebrations - Lower Keys
- Conch Republic Days - Key West
- Earth Day 5K Run/Walk - Key West
- Easter Bonnet Brunch - Key West
- Herman Lucerne Memorial Tarpon Cup - Islamorada
- Islamorada Seafood Festival & Art Show
- Key West Sailfish Tournament
- Key West Songwriters Festival
- REEF Arts & Science Festival - Key Largo
- Stock Island Earth Day Clean Up - Lower Keys
- Tarponian Tournament
- Worlds Longest Parade - Key West

## MAY

- Annual Mothers Day Dolphin Tournament - Marathon
- Annual Skippers Dolphin Tournament - Key Largo
- Battle in the Bay Dragon Boat Races - Marathon
- Cinco de Mayo Celebrations - Area Wide
- Cow Key Bridge Run - Key West
- Faro Blanco Tarpon Tournament
- I.CARE Trash Derby & Festival - FL Keys
- Key Largo Critter Cruise
- Marathon International Tarpon Tournament
- Marathon Offshore Bull & Cow Dolphin Tournament
- Memorial Day Events - Marathon
- Memorial Weekend Full Moon Beach Party - Islamorada
- Reef Relief Annual Luau - Key West
- Reelin' for a Cause Kids Fishing Tournament - Key West
- Run for Rhonda 5K - Key West
- Survivors Party - Key West
- Talk Derby To Me - Key West
- Taste of Key West

## JUNE

- Annual Don Hawley Invitational Tarpon Fly Tournament - FL Keys
- Annual Ladies Tarpon Tournament - Marathon
- Annual VFW Fishing Tournament - Lower Keys
- Big Gay 5K - Key West
- Coralpalooza Open House - Key Largo
- Fathers Day Dolphin Tournament - Marathon
- I Love Stock Island Festival - Lower Keys
- Key West PRIDE Celebration, Street Fair & Parade
- Local Artisan & Gourmet Market - Islamorada
- Royal Poinciana Red Party - Key West

## JULY

- 4th of July Marathon Beach Party & Fireworks
- Annual Underwater Music Festival - Key West
- Big Pine Key 4th of July Celebration & Fireworks - Lower Keys
- Bone Island Bare It All - Key West
- Florida Keys Spearfishing Tournament - Marathon
- Hemingway 5K Sunset Run & Paddleboard Race - Key West
- Hemingway Days - Key West
- Islamorada 4th of July Fireworks
- Key Largo 4th of July Parade & Fireworks
- Key West 4th of July Fireworks Celebration
- Key West Key Lime Festival
- Key West Mermaid Festival
- Marathon 4th of July Parade, Celebration & Fireworks
- Marathon Lionfish Tournament
- Mel Fisher Days - Key West
- Miss Firecracker Pageant - Key West
- Rotary Key West 4th of July 5K Walk/Run
- Tildens Lobster Rodeo - Marathon

## AUGUST

- City Bikes Key Largo Triathlon - Key West
- Key West Lobsterfest
- National Night Out - Area Wide
- Miami Boat Rally - Key Largo
- RumFest Key West
- Tropical Heat - Key West
- WLRN / Florida Keys Museum & Attractions Weekend - FL Keys

## SEPTEMBER

- Conch Scramble Charity Golf Classic
- Girls Avation Days - Marathon
- Florida Keys Birding & Wildlife Festival - Marathon
- Key West Paddle Classic
- Labor Day Memorial Celebration at Islamorada Hurricane Monument
- Marathon International Bonefish Tournament
- Sword Fest - Marathon
- Womenfest Key West

## OCTOBER

- Annual Fantasy Fest - Key West
- Annual Green Parrot Halloween Party - Key West
- A Very Pinfish Halloween Bash - Key Largo
- Goombay Street Festival
- Halloween Events & Trick or Treating - Marathon & Area Wide
- Headdress Ball - Key West
- Key Largo Witches Ride
- Key West World Championship Powerboat Races - Thru November - Key West
- Lower Keys Rotary Haunted House & Creepy Carnival - Lower Keys
- Makin Strides Against Breat Cancer Walk - Marathon
- Reef Fest - Key Largo
- ReMARCable Tour de Keys - FL Keys
- Royal Coronation Ball - Key West
- Southernmost Half Marathon - Key West
- Take Stock in Children Back Country Challenge - Tavernier
- Trunk or Treat - Marathon
- Underwater Pumpkin Carving Contest - Key Largo

## NOVEMBER

- Annual City Celebration - Marathon
- BPW Taste of The Islands - Marathon
- Dios de Los Muertos - FL Keys
- Garden Club Fall Festival - Marathon
- Key West Film Festival
- Key West Holiday Fest
- Lighting of The Key West Harbor Walk of Lights
- Light Up Key Largo
- Sugarloaf Showdown - Lower Keys
- Thanksgiving Events - Area Wide
- Turkey Trot 5K - Marathon
- The Island Art Festival - Big Pine Key
- Worlds Fastest Boat Parade - Key West

## DECEMBER

- Bone Island Bare it ALL - Key West
- Boot Key Harbor Lighted Boat Parade - Marathon
- Faro Blanco New Years Anchor Drop - Marathon
- Historic Lighted Inn Tours - Key West
- Holiday Lighting - Marathon City Park
- House & Garden Tours - Key West
- Islamorada Holiday Fest
- Key Colony Beach Lighted Boat Parade
- Key Largo Bridge Run
- Key West Holiday Parade
- Key West Krampus Walk
- Key West Pirates in Paradise
- Key West Triathlon
- Lighted Boat Parade - Key West
- Marathon Holiday Events
- Nutcracker Key West
- NYE Cielbrations - Area Wide
- Schooner Wharf Bar Lighted Boat Parade - Key West
- Tree Lighting at Fishermans Community Hospital
- Waterfront Winter Wonderland - FL Keys
- Zontas Festival of Trees - Marathon

*\* Events are subject to change*



# Monroe County History

## Monroe County Communities

### Cities

Key Colony Beach - 790  
Key West - 26,444 (County Seat)  
Layton - 210  
Marathon - 9,689

### Village

Islamorada - 7,107

### Census designated places

Big Coppitt Key - 2,869  
Big Pine Key - 4,521  
Cudjoe Key - 2,019  
Duck Key - 727  
Key Largo - 12,447  
North Key Largo - 1,431  
Tavernier - 2,530  
Stock Island - 4,722

### Other Unincorporated Communities

Bahia Honda Key  
Bay Point  
Everglades  
Flamingo  
Marquesas Keys  
Sugarloaf Shores

*\*Populations are approximate.*



In April of 1823, Commodore Porter made his arrival, shortly before Monroe County was established on July 3, 1823. This county was named in honor of James Monroe, who served as the fifth president of the United States from 1817 to 1825. Key West officially became a city in 1828, and by 1830, it had a population of 517 residents. The town was mapped out by 1829, covering an area of 258 acres divided into 64 blocks. Monroe County holds the distinction of being the southernmost county in Florida as well as in the entire United States. According to the 2020 census, its population stood at 82,874, with Key West serving as the county seat.

### Islamorada

Islamorada, sometimes referred to as Isla Morada, is a village that has been incorporated within Monroe County, Florida. It is situated on five islands—Tea Table Key, Lower Matecumbe Key, Upper Matecumbe Key, Windley Key, and Plantation Key—nestled between Miami and Key West in the Florida Keys. According to the 2020 census, the village's population stood at 7,107. The term Islamorada, which translates to "purple island" in Spanish (spelled isla morada), originated from the early Spanish explorers who traversed the region. Notably, Islamorada was home to one of the stations on the Overseas Railroad. The village was officially incorporated on December 31, 1997.



# Monroe County Communities

## Key Largo

Key Largo, situated on the island of the same name in the upper Florida Keys, is an unincorporated region and a census-designated location in Monroe County, Florida. The term “Key Largo” derives from the Spanish phrase Cayo Largo, translating to “long key.” It is the first island and community encountered on the route from the Overseas Highway to Key West, and it also housed one of the stations for the Overseas Railroad. According to the most recent census, the population stands at 12,447.

## Key West-(County Seat)

Key West serves as the county seat for Monroe County, which encompasses most of the Florida Keys and a section of the Everglades. The city covers an area of 5.6 square miles and had a population of 26,444 according to the 2020 census. Its official motto is “One Human Family.” Prior to the 19th century, Key West was inhabited at various times by individuals related to or under the influence of the Calusa and the Tequesta tribes. The last known Native American inhabitants were Calusa refugees who were relocated to Cuba following the transfer of Florida from Spain to Great Britain in 1763. From 1763 until 1821, a period that began with British control and concluded with the United States acquiring Florida from Spain, there were minimal or no permanent residents in the Florida Keys. In 1815, the Spanish governor of Cuba granted the island of Key West to Juan Pablo Salas, a Royal Spanish Navy Artillery officer stationed in Saint Augustine, Florida. After the United States took over Florida in 1821, Salas was so motivated to sell Key West that he ended up selling it twice.

## Marathon

Marathon is located in Monroe County within the heart of the Florida Keys. Although the region has been inhabited for a considerable period, Marathon itself is a relatively recent establishment, having gained city status in 1999. The name “Marathon” originates from the efforts of workers on the Florida East Coast Railroad. These laborers, who toiled both day and night to finish the railway project, expressed their frustration by saying, “this is turning into a real marathon” due to the intense workload and challenges they faced. This phrase eventually inspired the name for a nearby railroad station. According to the 2020 census, the population of the city stood at 9,689 residents.

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# Beaches

## Anne's Beach

Islamorada

## Bahia Honda Key Beach

12 miles south of Marathon

## Ballast Key Beach

South West of Key West & East of Woman Cay

## Boca Chica Beach

354 Boca Chica Rd | Key West | 305-453-8808

## Little Duck Key Veterans' Memorial Beach

West end of the Seven Mile Bridge, Mile Marker 40 off of U.S. 1

## Monroe County Clarence S. Higgs Memorial Beach

100 Atlantic Blvd. | Key West | 305-289-6036

## Simonton Street Beach

0 Simonton Street | Key West

## Smathers Beach

South Roosevelt Blvd. | Key West

## South Beach

Duval Street | Key West

# Fishing Piers

## Bow Channel Fishing Bridge

US-1, MM 20 | 305-853-3571

## Channel Five Fishing Pier, West

US-1, MM 71 | Upper Keys - 305-852-7161, Lower Keys - 305-295-5193

## Channel Two Fishing Bridge

S-1, MM 73 | Islamorada | 305-853-3571

## Kemp Channel Fishing Pier

US-1, MM 23.5 | Summerland Key | 305-853-3571

## Little Duck-Missouri Channel Fishing Bridge

US-1, MM 39.5 | 305-853-3571

## Long Key Viaduct Fishing Bridge

US-1, MM 63 and MM 65.5 | 305-853-3571

## Missouri-Ohio Channel Fishing Bridge

US-1, MM 39 | 305-853-3571

## Niles Channel Fishing Pier, East

US-1, MM 26 | 305-853-3571

## Niles Channel Fishing Pier, West

US-1, MM 25 | 305-853-3571

## Ohio-Bahia Honda Channel Fishing Bridge

US-1, MM 38.5 | 305-853-3571

## Old Seven Mile Bridge, West end

US-1, MM 40 | Marathon | Upper Keys - 305-852-7161, Lower Keys - 305-295-5193

## Park Channel Fishing Bridge

US-1, MM 18 | 305-853-3571

## Pine Channel Fishing Pier, East

US-1, MM 29 | 305-853-3571

## Pine Channel Fishing Pier, West

US-1, MM 28.5 | 305-853-3571

## Toms Harbor Channel Fishing Bridge

US-1, MM 61 | Marathon | 305-853-3571

## Toms Harbor Cut Fishing Bridge

US-1, MM 62 | 305-853-3571

## Shark Key Fishing Bridge

Overseas Hwy., MM 11.5 | Key West | 305-853-3571

## Sombrero Beach

End of Sombrero Beach Rd. | Marathon | 305-743-6598

## Spanish Harbor Channel Fishing Pier, East

US-1, MM 34 | Upper Keys - 305-852-7161, Lower Keys - 305-295-5193

## White Street Fishing Pier

Atlantic Blvd. & White St. | Key West | 305-809-3700



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Our Waterfront Tiki Restaurant and Bar is pleased to offer a variety of dining options: Breakfast from 8 to 11 AM, Lunch and Dinner from 11 AM to 10 PM, and Sushi from 11 AM to 10 PM. Enjoy Happy Hour from 3 to 6 PM and live music from 6 to 9 PM. We are renowned for our Southern-style BBQ, featuring Pulled Pork, NC Pork, Mojo Marinade Cuban Pork, BBQ Pulled Beef Brisket, BBQ Ribs, BBQ Chicken, and Fish—all smoked daily. Our menu also includes fresh local seafood, such as Lobster, Stone Crabs, Snapper, Mahi, Grouper, Cobia, Wahoo, Shrimp, and Oysters. Don't miss out on our top-notch sushi and our original Deep Fried Key Lime Pie. Experience the authentic Florida Keys atmosphere with our famous Mojitos, tropical cocktails, and the coldest beer in town. We look forward to welcoming you! Too tired to cook after a big day of fishing? Bring in your catch and we'll cook it for you. Porky's is a dog-friendly restaurant. All well behaved dogs on leashes are welcome.



## **ASTRO PARK PLAYGROUND**

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305-453-8808

## **BAYPOINT PARK**

5 West Circle Drive | Saddlebunch Keys |  
305-453-8808

## **BAYVIEW PARK**

Key West

## **BERNSTEIN PARK AND RECREATION CENTER**

6751 5th St. | Stock Island | 305-394-1173

## **BIG COPPITT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT PARK**

276 Ave. F | Big Coppitt Key | 305-453-8808

## **BIG PINE KEY COMMUNITY CENTER**

179 Key Deer Blvd. | Big Pine Key |  
305-394-1173

## **BIG PINE KEY COMMUNITY PARK**

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## **BILL BUTLER PARK**

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# HURRICANE SAFETY

## Top Five Tips



If authorities issue evacuation orders, follow them promptly. Delaying evacuation can put your life and the lives of emergency responders at risk. They have the most up-to-date information on the storm and can provide guidance on the safest course of action. Remember that each hurricane is unique, so it's essential to stay informed and adapt your plans accordingly. Preparedness and early action are key to minimizing risks and ensuring the safety of yourself and your loved ones during a hurricane.

- 1. STAY INFORMED**
- 2. SECURE YOUR HOME**
- 3. FOLLOW EVACUATION ORDERS & GUIDELINES**
- 4. EMERGENCY SUPPLIES**
- 5. EVACUATION PLANNING**

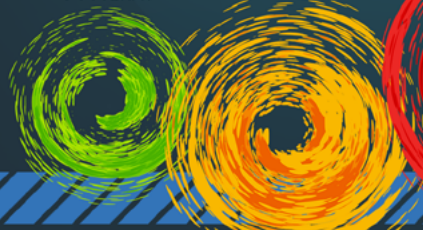
CAT 5  
157+ MPH

### HURRICANE CATEGORIES

The Highest Recorded Wind Speed of a Hurricane is 215 mph

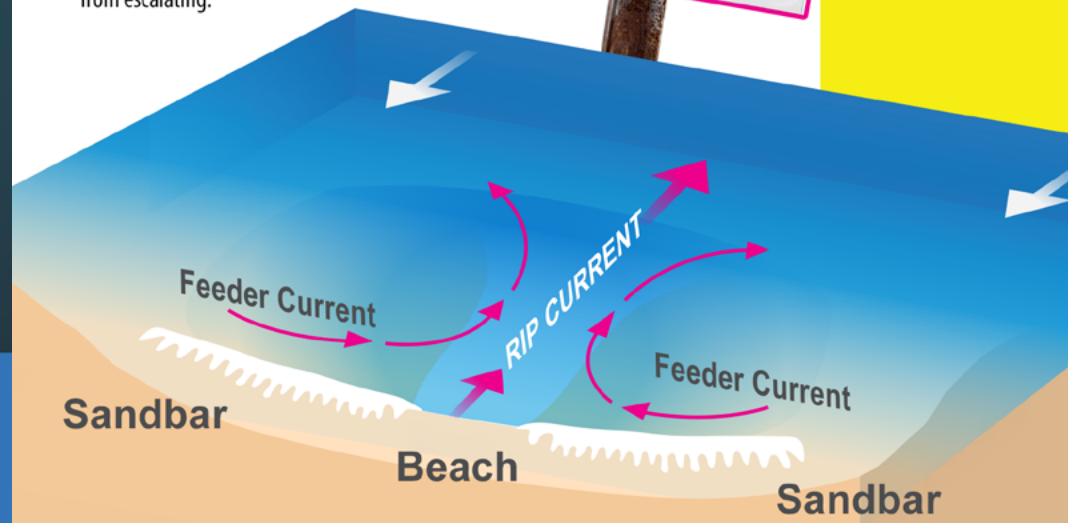
CAT 1-2  
74-110 MPH

CAT 3-4  
110-156 MPH



Rip currents are powerful, narrow channels of fast-moving water that can pose a danger to swimmers and surfers. Getting caught in a rip current can be frightening, but knowing how to recognize and handle them can help you stay safe. Here's how to avoid or get out of a rip current in the ocean:

- 1. Stay Calm & Don't Fight the Current:** If you find yourself caught in a rip current, stay calm and try not to panic. Remember that rip currents do not pull swimmers underwater; instead, they pull them away from the shore. Avoid fighting against the current by swimming directly back to shore, as this can lead to exhaustion.
- 2. Float & Conserve Energy:** If you're unable to swim out of the rip current, conserve your energy by floating or treading water. Signal for help by waving your arms and calling for assistance if you see lifeguards or other beachgoers nearby. Most rip currents are narrow, and you will eventually be carried out of the current and into calmer waters.
- 3. Swim Parallel to the Shore:** If you feel confident in your swimming abilities, swim parallel to the shoreline instead of trying to swim directly back to shore. Rip currents are typically narrow, so swimming parallel to the shore can help you escape the pull of the current. Once you're out of the rip current, you can then swim back to the shore at an angle.
- 4. Use Waves to Help You Escape:** Wait for waves to push you towards shore and use them to assist your escape from the rip current. Time your movements with the breaking waves, and use the momentum to swim towards the shore. Be patient and persistent, and don't exhaust yourself by attempting to fight against the current.
- 5. Seek Assistance if Needed:** If you're unable to escape the rip current on your own or if you're feeling exhausted, continue to signal for help and wait for assistance from lifeguards or other beachgoers. Don't hesitate to call for help if you need it, as prompt action can prevent a dangerous situation from escalating.



# Rip Currents



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 Resident Annual Saltwater Shoreline License: No-Cost  
 Annual Resident Military Gold Sportsman's License: \$20.00  
 Annual Resident Gold Sportsman's License: \$100.00  
 Five-Year Resident Gold Sportsman's License: \$494.00  
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 Saturday following Thanksgiving

## Simonton Beach Park

North end of Simonton St., Key West

## Garrison Bight Key West City Marina

1801 N Roosevelt Blvd., Key West

## 11th Street Boat Ramp

South end of 11th St., Key West

## Cow Key Marina

5031 5th Ave., Stock Island

## Murray Marine Sales and Service

5710 Overseas Hwy., Stock Island

## Oceanside Marina

5950 Penninsular Ave., Stock Island

## Stock Island Public Boat Ramp

US-1, MM 5, Oceanside, Stock Island

## Gulf View Park

Corner of Barcelona St. and Del Mar Blvd., Big Coppitt Key

## Shark Key Public Boat Ramp

US-1, MM 11, Oceanside, Big Coppitt Key

## Sugarloaf Lodge and Marina

17015 Overseas Hwy., Sugarloaf Key

## Sugarloaf Key/Key West KOA

251 CR 939, Sugarloaf Key

## Cudjoe Gardens Marina

477 Drost Dr., Cudjoe Key

## Cudjoe Key Boat Ramp

North end of Blimp Road, Cudjoe Key

## Looe Key Reef Resort

US-1, MM 27, Oceanside, Ramrod Key

## Dolphin Marina

28530 Overseas Hwy., Little Torch Key

## State Road 4A Boat Ramp

State Road 4A, Little Torch Key

## Eden Pines Boat Ramp

Bittersweet Ave and Geranium Ave., Big Pine Key

## Koehn Avenue Boat Ramp

North end of Koehn Ave., Big Pine Key

## Old Wooden Bridge

Guest Cottages and Marina

1791 Bogie Dr., Big Pine Key

## Spanish Harbor Wayside Park

US-1, MM 34, Bayside, Scout Key

## Bahia Honda State Park

36850 Overseas Hwy., Bahia Honda

## Sunshine Key Resort and Marina

38801 Overseas Hwy, Big Pine Key

## Little Duck Key Wayside Park

US-1, MM40, Bayside, Little Duck Key

## 33rd Street Boat Ramp

825 33rd St., Marathon

## Harbour Pointe Marine

4681 Overseas Hwy., Marathon

## Boatman's Sombrero Resort and Marina

19 Sombrero Blvd., Marathon

## North Marathon Shores Boat Ramp

Aviation Blvd. and Harbor Dr., Marathon

## Royal Hawaiian Motel

12020 Overseas Hwy., Marathon

## Crawl Key

US-1, MM 54, Bayside, Marathon

## Grassy Key Marina

US-1, MM 54, Bayside, Marathon

## Hawk's Cay Resort and Marina

61 Hawk's Cay Blvd., Duck Key

## Bay View Inn and Marina

3 North Conch Ave., Conch Key

## Sea Bird Marina

69501 Overseas Hwy., Long Key

## Indian Key Fill Boat Ramp

US-1, MM 79, Bayside, Islamorada

## Harbor Lights at Holiday Isle

84001 Overseas Hwy., Islamorada

## Plantation Key Boat Ramp

End of E. Ridge Rd., Islamorada

## Founder's Park

87000 Overseas Hwy., Islamorada

## Florida Keys Dive Center

90451 Old Highway, Tavernier

## Mangrove Marina

200 Florida Ave., Tavernier

## Harry Harris Park

End of Beach Rd., Key Largo

## Sunset Point Park

20 Sunset Rd., Key Largo

## John Pennekamp State Park

US-1, MM 102.5 Oceanside, Key Largo

## Caribbean Club Ramp

10470 Overseas Hwy., Key Largo

## Pontune's Marina Tiki Bar, & Grille

107690 Overseas Hwy., Key Largo

## Gilbert's Resort Marina

107900 Overseas Hwy., Key Largo

## Corcodile Lake NWR -

Steamboat Creek, Card Sound Rd. at Steamboat Creek, Key Largo

## Corcodile Lake NWR -

Tubby's Creek, Card Sound Rd. at Tubby's Creek, Key Largo

## Corcodile Lake NWR -

Mosquito Creek, Card Sound Rd. at Mosquito Creek, Key Largo

## Card Sound Bridge - East

Card Sound Rd., east side of Card Sound Bridge

## Card Sound Bridge - West

Card Sound Rd., east side of Card Sound Bridge

## Alabama Jacks - Under Construction

58000 Card Sound Rd., Key Largo



Nestled in the heart of the Florida Keys, Islamorada is often referred to as the “Sport Fishing Capital of the World,” and for good reason. This idyllic archipelago, which translates to “Isle of the Purple Island,” boasts an unparalleled combination of pristine waters, abundant marine life, and a rich fishing heritage that attracts anglers from across the globe. With its turquoise lagoons, coral reefs, and deep-sea waters just a stone’s throw away, Islamorada provides the perfect backdrop for both seasoned fishermen and novice enthusiasts eager to cast their lines.

The allure of Islamorada lies not only in its breathtaking scenery but also in its diverse fishing opportunities. Whether you’re chasing tarpon in the backcountry, battling marlin in the open ocean, or reef fishing for snapper and grouper, the waters surrounding this captivating destination cater to every angler’s dream. The dedicated fishing community here includes experienced guides and charters who share their wealth of knowledge, ensuring that visitors experience the thrill of landing that coveted catch.

Furthermore, Islamorada’s commitment to preserving its natural resources is evident in its numerous fishing tournaments and conservation efforts, which celebrate the sport while promoting sustainability. From the famous “Islamorada Fishing Festival” to the annual “Pelican Cove Tarpon Tournament,” the community embraces its role as a fishing mecca, blending competition with camaraderie.

We will delve deeper into what makes Islamorada a fishing paradise, exploring its unique ecosystems, annual fishing events, and the vibrant culture that surrounds this watery wonderland. Get ready to discover why, once you cast your line in Islamorada, you may never want to reel it back in!

## The Unique Geography of Islamorada

Islamorada’s unique geography is a key element that sets it apart as the sport fishing capital of the world. Nestled in the heart of the Florida Keys, this picturesque village spans several islands connected by a series of bridges and waterways, creating a vibrant tapestry of marine ecosystems. The waters surrounding Islamorada boast an intricate blend of shallow flats, deep channels, and coral reefs, each offering diverse fishing opportunities that cater to anglers of all skill levels.

The shallow, crystal-clear waters of Florida Bay are perfect for bonefishing, allowing enthusiasts to stalk these elusive fish as they glide gracefully over sandy bottoms. Meanwhile, the nearby Atlantic Ocean presents a different thrill altogether. Here, the dramatic drop-off of the continental shelf creates a rich environment for larger game fish, including marlin, sailfish, and mahi-mahi. This juxtaposition of serene flats and exhilarating deep-sea fishing makes Islamorada a beloved destination for both novice fishermen and seasoned veterans.

Additionally, the warm, tropical climate of Islamorada ensures year-round fishing opportunities. The area’s mild winters and balmy summers attract both fish and anglers alike, making it a bustling hub for fishing charters and tournaments throughout the year. With its stunning sunsets painting the skies in vibrant hues, the experience of casting lines in these idyllic waters is as enchanting as the catch itself. Whether you’re wading into the flats or setting out on a charter, the unique geography of Islamorada guarantees an unforgettable adventure on the water, solidifying its reputation as the ultimate sport fishing destination.

## Types of Sport Fishing Available in Islamorada

Islamorada, often referred to as the Sport Fishing Capital of the World, offers a diverse array of fishing experiences that cater to anglers of all skill levels and preferences. Nestled between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, this picturesque oasis is blessed with an abundance of marine life, making it a prime destination for various types of sport fishing.

**\*\*1. Offshore Fishing:\*\*** Venture into the deep blue waters of the Gulf Stream, where you’ll find the thrill of targeting big game fish such as marlin, sailfish, and tuna. The offshore fishing scene in Islamorada is legendary, with charters that provide experienced captains and crews ready to guide you to the hottest fishing spots. Imagine the adrenaline rush as you fight to reel in a massive fish, the salty breeze whipping through your hair and the sun glistening on the water.

**\*\*2. Inshore Fishing:\*\*** If you prefer a more relaxed fishing experience, the inshore waters around the Florida Keys offer fantastic opportunities to catch species like tarpon, snook, and redfish. The mangroves and grass flats create a unique ecosystem that attracts a variety of fish, and many local guides can take you to hidden hotspots. Picture yourself casting a line in the shallows, surrounded by stunning views of the lush coastal landscape while waiting for a tug on your line.

**\*\*3. Backcountry Fishing:\*\*** For those seeking a peaceful retreat, backcountry fishing in the Everglades National Park is an unforgettable experience. This pristine environment is teeming with wildlife, including fish like bonefish and permit, as well as an array of bird species and marine life. The tranquil waters and serene surroundings provide the perfect backdrop for a day of fishing, making it a favorite choice for those looking to escape the hustle and bustle.

**\*\*4. Fly Fishing:\*\*** Islamorada is a premier destination for fly fishing enthusiasts, offering access to some of the best shallow-water fishing in the world. The crystal-clear waters make it easier to spot fish, allowing anglers to hone their skills while targeting species like tarpon and bonefish. With expert guides available to provide tips and techniques, even novice fly fishers can find success in these bountiful waters.

In Islamorada, the variety of sport fishing options ensures that every angler can find their perfect adventure. Whether you’re aiming for a trophy fish or seeking a peaceful day on the water, this tropical paradise provides the ideal setting to create unforgettable memories and stories to share for years to come. So, grab your gear and get ready to cast your lines in the vibrant waters of Islamorada!

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## The Best Seasons for Fishing in Islamorada

When it comes to sport fishing in Islamorada, timing is everything. The waters surrounding this stunning slice of Florida Keys paradise teem with diverse marine life, making it a year-round destination for anglers. However, understanding the seasonal patterns can elevate your fishing experience, ensuring you reel in the catch of a lifetime.

**\*\*Spring (March to May)\*\*** is often heralded as one of the prime seasons for fishing in Islamorada. As water temperatures begin to rise, fish become more active, and migratory species such as tarpon and bonefish make their grand entrance. The excitement of battling a silver king as it leaps from the water is an experience every angler should seek out during these months. Additionally, the annual tarpon migration draws fishermen from all over the world, eager to witness and participate in this spectacular event.

**\*\*Summer (June to August)\*\*** presents an exciting opportunity for deep-sea fishing. During these months, the waters are alive with an array of game fish, including mahi-mahi, wahoo, and tuna. The warm temperatures create a vibrant ecosystem, and the fishing charter boats are often filled with enthusiastic anglers ready to chase after their prized catch. Plus, the long daylight hours allow for extended fishing trips, maximizing your chances of success out at sea.

As the **\*\*fall months (September to November)\*\*** roll in, the fishing scene in Islamorada transforms again. This season ushers in the grouper and snapper spawning period, making it an ideal time for those looking to catch these species. The weather is typically mild during this time, allowing for comfortable fishing conditions and more opportunities to explore the bountiful waters. Anglers can also enjoy the transition period when migratory species such as sailfish begin to arrive, promising thrilling battles with these acrobatic fighters.

Finally, **\*\*winter (December to February)\*\*** brings a unique charm to fishing in Islamorada. While temperatures drop slightly, the waters remain teeming with life. This is the season for targeting sailfish, as they migrate south to the warmer waters of the Keys. The annual sailfish tournament attracts competitive anglers eager to showcase their skills in hopes of landing the biggest catch. Additionally, the cooler weather often means less crowded waters, allowing for a more serene fishing experience.

Each season in Islamorada offers its own unique fishing opportunities, making it a year-round haven for sport fishing enthusiasts. Whether you're casting lines during the bustling spring or enjoying the tranquility of winter fishing, there's no shortage of adventure in this tropical paradise. So, pack your gear and prepare for unforgettable fishing experiences in the sport fishing capital of the world!

## Tips for Beginners: What You Need to Know Before You Cast

If you're new to the exhilarating world of sport fishing, Islamorada is the perfect place to embark on your aquatic adventure. Before you cast your line into the sparkling waters of this tropical paradise, there are a few essential tips to ensure your experience is not only enjoyable but also successful.

**\*\*1. Understand the Local Regulations:\*\*** Before you hit the water, familiarize yourself with the fishing regulations specific to Islamorada. Different species have varying seasons, size limits, and bag limits. Responsible fishing helps preserve the vibrant ecosystem that makes this area so stunning.

**\*\*2. Choose the Right Gear:\*\*** As a beginner, you don't need to invest in the most expensive equipment right away. A basic rod and reel combo, suitable for the type of fish you plan to target—be it tarpon, bonefish, or snapper—will do just fine. Many local tackle shops

offer rentals and can provide recommendations tailored to your fishing goals.

**\*\*3. Timing is Everything:\*\*** Fish are often more active at certain times of the day. Early mornings and late afternoons are prime times for fishing in Islamorada. Plan your excursions around these peak hours for a better chance at a big catch.

**\*\*4. Learn Basic Techniques:\*\*** Familiarize yourself with fundamental fishing techniques such as casting, reeling, and knot tying. Watching online tutorials or joining a local fishing class can be invaluable. The more comfortable you are with your techniques, the more enjoyable your fishing experience will be.

**\*\*5. Be Patient and Stay Positive:\*\*** Fishing requires patience, and it's not uncommon for beginners to experience slow days. Maintain a positive attitude, enjoy the breathtaking scenery, and take in the soothing sound of the waves. Remember, fishing is as much about the journey as it is about the catch.

**\*\*6. Ask for Help:\*\*** Don't hesitate to seek assistance from local anglers or guides. Many seasoned fishers are eager to share their knowledge, tips, and favorite spots. Hiring a local guide for your first outing can be a great way to learn the ropes while increasing your chances of landing that prized fish.

With these tips in mind, you're ready to experience the thrill of sport fishing in Islamorada. As you cast your line into the clear blue waters, embrace the spirit of adventure that comes with every trip into this angler's paradise. Whether you're reeling in your first catch or simply soaking up the sun, the memories you create will surely keep you coming back for more.

## The Role of Conservation in Sport Fishing

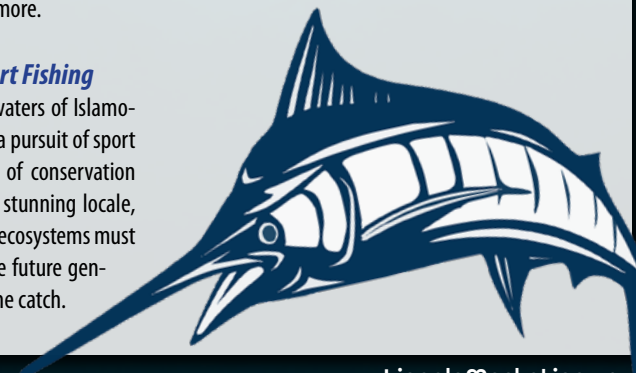
As the sun rises over the turquoise waters of Islamorada, casting a line becomes not just a pursuit of sport but an act of stewardship. The role of conservation in sport fishing is paramount in this stunning locale, where the delicate balance of marine ecosystems must be respected and preserved to ensure future generations can experience the thrill of the catch.

Islamorada's commitment to sustainable fishing practices is woven into the very fabric of its identity. Anglers are encouraged to embrace catch-and-release techniques, allowing prized species like tarpon and bonefish to thrive and continue their life cycles. Local fishing charters often participate in educational programs that emphasize the importance of respecting size and bag limits, which helps maintain healthy fish populations and supports the biodiversity of the waters.

Additionally, initiatives such as the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary showcase the community's dedication to protecting its natural resources. This sanctuary is a haven for diverse marine life, from vibrant coral reefs to the migratory patterns of sea turtles and dolphins. Anglers in Islamorada are not just fishing; they are actively engaging in conservation efforts that directly impact the health of the ocean.

Community events, such as the annual Islamorada Fishing Tournament, often incorporate conservation themes, raising awareness about the importance of sustainable practices while celebrating the thrill of sport fishing. Educational workshops and seminars provide anglers with the knowledge needed to fish responsibly, understanding the significance of their actions on the ecosystem.

In Islamorada, conservation is not merely an afterthought; it is integrated into the very essence of fishing in paradise. By prioritizing sustainable practices, the region ensures that the sport fishing capital of the world remains a vibrant and thriving destination for years to come, where both anglers and marine life can flourish side by side.





## 7 Artists & Friends Key West

213 Simonton St. | Key West |  
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## African Cemetery at Higgs Beach

White Street and Atlantic  
Boulevard | Key West

## Alan S. Maltz Gallery

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## Art@830

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305-295-9595

## Artis in Paradise Gallery

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305-872-1828

## Audubon House Gallery & Tropical Gardens

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305-294-2116

## Barefoot Billys Dolphin & Snorkel

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305-900-3088

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## Classic Harbor Line Key West America 2.0

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## Clayton Sterling Baseball Complex

900 Kennedy Drive | Key West

## Coast Guard Cutter Ingham Maritime Museum

Truman Waterfront on the western  
edge of Key West | Key West |  
305-809-3769

## Cocco & Salem Gallery

281 Front St. | Key West |  
305-295-6616

## Coffee Butler Amphitheater

21 East Quay Road | Key West

## Cozumel Park

1208 19th Terrace | Key West

## Crane Point Museum & Nature Center / Crane Point Hammock

5550 Overseas Highway Marathon  
| Museum 305-743-9100

## Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge

10750 County Rd. 905 | Key Largo |  
305-451-4223

## Curry Mansion

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305-294-5349

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305-395-2210

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802-989-5910

## Dolphins Plus

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| 205-289-1121

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## Florida Keys Aquarium Encounters

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## Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center

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## Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Key West  
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3501 S Roosevelt Blvd. | Key West |  
305-296-3913

## Frederick Douglass Gym

111 Olivia Street | Key West |  
305-809-3990 / 305-809-3818

## Gallery at Kona Kai

97802 Overseas Hwy. | Key Largo |  
305-852-7200

## Gallery on Greene

606 Greene St. | Key West |  
305-294-1669

## Gingerbread Square Gallery

1207 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-296-8900

## Great White Heron National Wildlife Refuge

20650 1st Ave. W | Cudjoe Key

## Guild Hall Gallery

614 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-296-6076

## Harrison Gallery

825 White St. | Key West |  
305-294-0609

## Harry S. Truman Little White House

111 Front St. | Key West |  
305-294-9911

## Hellings Curry Museum Home of the Key West Womens

319 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-294-2039

## Hemmingway Home & Museum

907 Whitehead St. | Key West |  
305-294-1575

## Historic Gato Building

1100 Simonton Street | Key West |  
305-292-4441

## History of Diving Museum

82990 Overseas Hwy. | Islamorada  
| 305-644-9737

## Historic Tours of America /

## Conch Tour Train

303 Front St. | Marathon |  
305-294-5161

## Historic Tours of America / Old

## Town Trolley

Mallory Square | Marathon |  
305-296-6688

## History of Diving Museum

82990 Overseas Hwy. | Islamorada  
| 305-664-9737

## Honest Eco Sustainable Eco Tours

231 Margaret St. | Key West |  
305-294-6306

## Islamorada Art Gallery by Pasta

81599 Old Hwy. | Islamorada |  
305-290-4262

## Islamorada Community

## Entertainment

88975 Overseas Hwy. | Tavernier

## Islamorada Public Library

Branch  
81830 Overseas Hwy. | Islamorada  
| 305-664-4645

## Island Safari Rentals

924 Greene St. | Key West |  
305-918-2949

## Island Style Gallery

512 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-292-7800

## JD Premier Avation

9850 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-619-9603

## Kalypso Gallery

217 Olivia St. | Key West |  
305-731-3226

## Key Largo Art Gallery

103200 Overseas Hwy. | Key Largo  
| 305-451-0052

## Key Largo Public Library Branch

101485 Overseas Hwy. | Key Largo  
| 305-451-2396

## Key West Art Center & Gallery

301 Front St. | Key West |  
305-294-1241

## Key West Artisan Market

1000 Atlantic Blvd. | Key West |  
305-731-3385

## Key West Aquarium

1 Whitehead Street | Key West |  
888-544-5927

## Key West Cemetary

Margaret & Angela Sts. | Key West

## Key West Firehous Museum

1024 Grinnell St. | Key West |  
305-849-0678

## Key West Gallery

601 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-292-9339

## Key West Golf Club

6450 E College Blvd. | Key West |  
305-294-5232

## Key West Pottery

1203 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-900-8303

## Key West Butterfly & Nature Conservatory

1316 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-296-2988

## Key West Fringe Theater

600 White St. | Key West |  
305-295-7676

## Key West Garden Club at Historic Fort West Martello Tower

Key West | 305-294-3210

## Key West Historic Cemetery

701 Passover Lane | Key West |  
305-809-3986

## Key West Historic Seaport and Marina

201 William Street | Key West

## Key West Lighthouse Museum

938 Whitehead St. | Key West |  
305-294-0012

## Key West Museum of Arts & History at the Custom House

281 Front St. | Key West |  
305-295-6616

## Key West National Wildlife Refuge

30587 Overseas Highway on Big  
Pine Key

## Key West Nature Preserve

Atlantic Blvd. | Key West

## Key West Seaplane Adventures

3741 S. Roosevelt Blvd. | Key West  
| 305-293-9300

## Key West Shipwreck Treasure Museum

1 Whitehead St. | Key West |  
305-292-8990

## Key West Theater

512 Eaton St. | Key West |  
305-985-0433

## Key West Turtle Museum

200 Margaret St. | Key West |  
305-294-0209

## Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Gardens

5210 College Rd. | Key West |  
305-296-1504

## Key West Veterans Memorial Garden

Jose Marti Drive and Truman  
Avenue | Key West



# Area Attractions



## Key West Wildlife Center

1801 White Street | Key West |  
305-292-1008

## Key West Public Library Branch

700 Fleming St. | Key West |  
305-292-3595

## Key West Wildlife Center & Aviary

1801 White St. | Key West |  
305-292-1008

## Keys History & Discovery Center

82100 Overseas Hwy. | Islamorada  
| 305-922-2237

## Lobster Trap Art Gallery & Studio

82200 Overseas Hwy. | Islamorada  
| 305-664-0001

## Mallory Square

400 Wall Street | Key West

## Marathon Cinema

5101 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-743-0288

## Marathon Community Theater

5101 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-743-5999

## Marathon Garden Club

5270 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-743-4971

## Marathon Public Library Branch

3490 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-743-5156

## Marathon Wild Bird Center

5550 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-743-8382

## Martin Luther King Jr. Community Pool

300 Catherine Street | Key West |  
305-809-3876

## Mel Fisher Maritime Museum

200 Greene Street | Key West |  
305-294-2633

## Michelle Nicole

## Low Art Gallery

MM 81.9 Bayside |  
Islamorada | 305-981-  
6424

## Morada Way Arts & Culture District

151 Morada Way | Islamorada |  
305-664-2471

## Murray E Nelson Government & Culture Center

102050 Overseas Hwy. | Key Largo  
| 305-852-7161

## Nancy Forrester's Secret Garden

518 Elizabeth St. | Key West |  
305-294-0015

## National Key Deer Refuge

30587 Overseas Hwy. |  
Big Pine Key | 305-872-0774

## Night Kayak

Key West  
3841 N Roosevelt Blvd. | Key West |  
305-304-4800

## Old Courthouse Community Center

88820 Overseas Hwy. | Tavernier |  
305-453-8726

## Old Road Gallery

88888 Overseas Hwy. | Tavernier |  
305-852-8935

## Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

700 Truman Ave. | Key West

## Peter Lik Fine Art Photography

400 Duval St. Ste. A | Key West |  
305-292-2550

## Pigeon Key Foundation & Marine Science Center

1090 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-743-5999

## Pigeon Key Historic Site

2010 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-743-5999

## Rain

## Barrel Artisan Village

86700 Overseas Hwy. | Islamorada  
| 305-521-2043

## Re-Cycle Bike Rentals & Service Shop

5160 US-1 | Stock Island |  
305-292-3336

## Red Barn Theater

319 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-296-9911

## Riggs Wildlife Refuge/Bridle Path

S Roosevelt Boulevard | Key West

## Ripleys Believe it or Not! Odditorium

108 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-293-9939

## Rosa E. Hernandez Softball Field

Northside Drive | Key West

## Salt Island Provisions

830 Fleming St. | Key West |  
305-517-6088

## San Carlos Institute

516 Duval St. | Key West |  
786-251-3399

## Shade Ceramics & Shutter Photography

1102 White St. | Key West |  
305-767-3769

## Shady Palm Art Gallery & Frame Shop

2888 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-998-4165

## Stone Soup Gallery & Frame Shop

802 White St. | Key West |  
305-296-2080

## Sunset Celebration at Mallory Square

Key West | 305-396-7046

## Sunset Watersports

201 William St. | Key West |  
305-296-2554

## Tennessee Williams Exhibit

513 Truman Ave. | Key West |  
305-842-1666

## Theater of the Sea

84721 Overseas Hwy. | Islamorada  
| 305-664-2431

## The Art Studio

12535 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-289-9013

## The Hale Gallery

81888 Overseas Hwy. #2 |  
Islamorada | 305-204-1216

## The Oldest House Museum

322 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-294-9501

## The Studios of Key West

533 Eaton St. | Key West |  
305-743-2040

## The Turtle Hospital

2390 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-743-2552

## Truman Waterfront Park Ampitheater

39 E Quay Rd. | Key West |  
305-473-5870

## Turtle Kraals Museum

700 Maragert St. | Key West |  
305-294-0209

## Uniques by Kennedy Studios

8903 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon |  
305-743-2040

## U.S. Coast Guard Cutter

Ingham Maritime Museum  
Key West | 305-394-9554

## Waterfront Playhouse

407 Wall St. | Key West |  
305-294-5015

## Wickers Sports Complex

Kennedy Drive | Key West

## Wyland Galleries of Key West

623 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-292-4998

## Yankee Freedom Dry Tortugas Trips

240 Margaret St. | Key West |  
800-634-0939

## ZaZoo Fine Art Gallery

622 Duval St. | Key West |  
305-294-8925

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# FLORIDA KEYS

The Florida Keys are a stunning archipelago that stretches over 120 miles off the southern tip of Florida, each island offering its own unique charm and allure. This tropical paradise is composed of approximately 1,700 islands, small and large, connected by the Overseas Highway, a scenic road that invites travelers to experience the breathtaking beauty of the region. The geography here is unlike any other, characterized by a series of coral reefs, mangroves, and crystal-clear turquoise waters that provide a striking backdrop for outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers alike.

The unique geography of the Keys is particularly evident in its vibrant coral reef system, the only living coral barrier reef in the continental United States. This underwater wonderland teems with marine life, offering snorkeling and diving opportunities that draw visitors from around the globe. From colorful parrotfish to majestic sea turtles, the vibrant ecosystem beneath the waves is a testament to the rich biodiversity that thrives in these waters. The nearby Dry Tortugas National Park, accessible only by boat or seaplane, adds to the allure with its pristine beaches, historic fort, and unmatched snorkeling experiences.

Above water, the natural beauty continues to impress. The lush mangroves along the coast serve as crucial habitats for countless bird species, while the soft, sandy beaches are perfect for soaking up the sun or enjoying a leisurely stroll. The sunsets in the Florida Keys are legendary, painting the sky in hues of orange, pink, and purple as the sun dips below the horizon, creating a magical atmosphere that captivates all who witness it.

Whether you're exploring the tranquil waters by kayak, hiking through the tropical landscape, or simply lounging on a beach with a cocktail in hand, the unique geography and natural beauty of the Florida Keys provide an enchanting experience that is both serene and exhilarating. It's this captivating blend of land and sea that makes the Keys a must-visit destination for anyone seeking the ultimate tropical getaway.

The Florida Keys are not just about sun-soaked beaches and turquoise waters; they are also home to a host of iconic landmarks and attractions that give this tropical paradise its unique charm. One cannot discuss the allure of the Keys without mentioning the iconic **Southernmost Point Buoy** in Key West. This brightly painted landmark, adorned with a bold red, yellow, and black design, marks the southernmost tip of the continental United States. Tourists flock here for the perfect photo op, capturing the essence of their journey to this remote paradise.

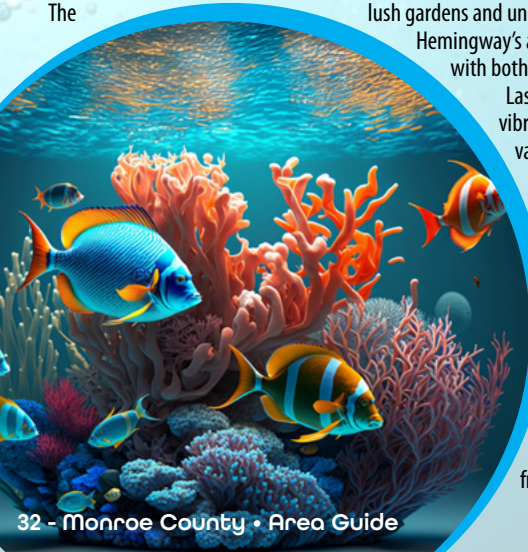
Another must-see attraction is the **Seven Mile Bridge**, an engineering marvel that connects the middle and lower keys. As you traverse this stunning stretch of road, you are treated to panoramic views of the crystalline waters below, with the sun glistening off the waves like a thousand scattered diamonds. Whether you are driving, biking, or simply stopping to take in the scenery, the experience is nothing short of breathtaking.

For those seeking adventure, the **John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park** in Key Largo is a treasure trove of marine wonders. It was the first underwater park in the U.S. and offers snorkeling and scuba diving opportunities among vibrant coral reefs teeming with colorful fish. The park's lush mangroves and seagrass beds also provide a habitat for a variety of wildlife, making it a perfect destination for nature enthusiasts.

In addition to natural wonders, the Florida Keys are rich in history and culture. The **Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum** in Key West allows visitors to step back in time and experience the life of the legendary author. The lush gardens and unique architecture of the house, combined with the stories of Hemingway's adventures, create an enchanting atmosphere that resonates with both literary fans and casual visitors alike.

Lastly, no visit would be complete without experiencing the vibrant nightlife and local flavors presented at the famous **Duval Street**. Known for its lively bars, eclectic shops, and delicious eateries, this bustling street is the heart of Key West's social scene. From sunset celebrations at Mallory Square to lively street performers and live music, the energy here is contagious and a true reflection of the Keys' laid-back yet spirited vibe.

With such diverse attractions that cater to every interest, the Florida Keys offer an unforgettable experience that keeps visitors coming back for more. Whether you're a history buff, an adventure seeker, or simply looking to bask in the sun, the unique landmarks of the Keys create an enchanting tapestry that sets this tropical paradise apart from any other destination.



## Keep Your Pets Safe



### HERE ARE A FEW KEY POINTS TO BE AWARE OF:

- 1. Leashing:** Always keep pets on a leash, especially near water bodies, to prevent them from wandering too close to potential alligator habitats.
- 2. Supervision:** Supervise your pets when they're outside. This is crucial during dawn and dusk, as alligators are more active during these times.
- 3. Avoid Water:** Keep pets away from lakes, ponds, and marshy areas where alligators might be lurking. Even small bodies of water can pose risks.
- 4. Training:** Ensure your pets have good recall and respond well to commands. This can help you quickly call them back if they venture too close to danger.
- 5. Feeding and Food Storage:** Do not feed alligators or leave pet food outside, as this can attract wildlife and increase the likelihood of encounters with alligators.





# So, You have decided to get a pet...

## NOW WHAT??

**Commitment and Time:** Owning a pet is a long-term commitment. Before bringing a pet home, consider your lifestyle and ensure you have enough time to spend with your pet. Dogs, cats, and many other animals require attention, exercise, and mental stimulation.

**Choose the Right Pet for Your Lifestyle:** Different pets have varying needs, temperaments, and activity levels. Research and select a pet that fits well with your lifestyle, living situation, and family dynamics. Whether you choose a dog, cat, bird, fish, or any other animal, make sure you can provide for its specific needs.

**Proper Nutrition:** Feed your pet a balanced and nutritious diet suitable for their species and age. Consult with a veterinarian to determine the best food options for your pet's health and well-being.

**Regular Exercise:** Most pets need regular physical activity to stay healthy and happy. Engage in playtime and exercise with your pet daily, as it helps prevent obesity and provides mental stimulation.

**Routine Veterinary Care:** Schedule regular check-ups with a veterinarian to monitor your pet's health, get necessary vaccinations, and address any concerns. Early detection of health issues can often lead to better outcomes.

**Spaying/Neutering:** Consider spaying or neutering your pet if you don't plan on breeding. This helps control the pet population and can have health benefits for your pet.

**Training and Socialization:** Properly train your pet to follow basic commands and have good manners. Socialize them with other animals and people from a young age to prevent behavioral issues later on.

**Provide a Safe Environment:** Ensure that your home and yard are safe for your pet. Remove hazards, keep toxic substances out of reach, and provide appropriate shelter from extreme weather conditions.

**Grooming:** Regular grooming is essential for most pets. Brush their fur, trim nails, and clean their ears as needed to keep them comfortable and healthy.

**Identification and Microchipping:** Keep identification tags with your current contact information on your pet's collar. Consider microchipping your pet as an extra measure to ensure they can be identified if lost.

**Love and Attention:** Pets thrive on love and attention from their owners. Spend quality time with your pet, provide affection, and build a strong bond.



**Respect and Understanding:** Learn to understand your pet's body language and behavior. Respect their boundaries and feelings, and avoid forcing them into uncomfortable situations.

**Patience and Forgiveness:** Pets, especially young ones, can be mischievous or have accidents. Be patient with them during the training process and forgive any mistakes they make along the way.

**Emergency Preparedness:** Have a plan in place for emergencies, including natural disasters. Know how to evacuate with your pet safely if needed.

**If you have just rescued / adopted a new fur baby, please it is important to remember the 3-3-3 RULE:**

### 3 Days:

In the first 3 days being in its new home, they will be feeling overwhelmed, scared & unsure of what is going on. They may also be uncomfortable being "themselves", and may not want to eat or drink. They may want to "shut down" or hide under a bed or in a crate, and they will test boundaries.

### 3 Weeks:

At this point, they may be a lot more comfortable & settling in. Learning a new routine can be overwhelming, so please be patient. By now they may have figured out the new environment & accepted that this may be their FURever home. Their personality traits will start to show, as well as any behavior issue that may be present.

### 3 Months:

For most fur babies, 3 months is enough time to finally be comfortable and begin to build trust and a true bond. A sense of security may be present & a set routine will help this process.

Please know that this is not the rule with every rescued or adopted pet, as some may need 6 months to a year to adjust & adapt, depending on MANY factors. Age of animal, what type of an environment did they come from?

## DOG PARKS

### Big Pine Dog Park

30150 South St. | Big Pine Key | 305-453-8808

### Clarence S. Higgs Memorial Beach Dog Park

100 Atlantic Blvd. | Key West |  
305-295-4385

### Dog Beach

1500 Vernon Avenue |  
Key West

### Marathon's Dog Park

9805 Overseas Hwy. | Marathon

### Stock Island Marina Village Dog Park

7001 Shrimp Rd. | Key West |  
877-496-8712

### Watson Field & Big Pine Dog Park

30150 South St. | Big Pine |

305-453-8808





As a seasoned real estate broker in the Florida Keys with over 32 years of experience, I have had the privilege of watching this unique market evolve and grow. My career has spanned various roles and achievements, from owning and operating my own real estate franchise to serving as the president of the Board of Realtors in 1995. I have been honored as the top listing and sales agent on multiple occasions, demonstrating my commitment to both my clients and my community.

The Florida Keys offer a distinct real estate landscape unlike any other in the world. Whether it's the allure of tropical waterfront living or the close-knit community vibe, this area attracts buyers who are not just looking for a house but a lifestyle. Over the decades, I've worked with countless clients to help them navigate the complexities of buying and selling in this highly sought-after market. From luxury waterfront estates to charming cottages, I've had the opportunity to represent some of the most iconic properties in the region, including the sale of the renowned Keys Castle in Key Largo.

One of the key elements to success in real estate, particularly in an area as unique as the Florida Keys, is local knowledge. Having lived and worked in this area for over three decades, I understand the nuances that can make or break a deal. From understanding the impact of zoning regulations and environmental considerations to knowing how seasonal trends affect the market, my expertise goes far beyond just matching buyers and sellers. I'm able to provide clients with the critical insights needed to make informed decisions.

My long-standing reputation and proven track record are built on trust, dedication, and results. Whether you're a first-time buyer looking for a vacation home, an investor seeking to expand your portfolio, or a seller hoping to maximize your property's value, I am here to guide you through every step of the process. Real estate is more than just transactions; it's about building relationships and ensuring that each client's needs are met with professionalism and care.

In the ever-changing world of real estate, having a knowledgeable and experienced broker by your side is invaluable. I look forward to continuing to serve the community I love and helping my clients find their perfect piece of paradise in the Florida Keys.



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