



Public Relations, Marketing & Government Affairs

TRAVEL
/ P R O F E S S I O N A L /

USA
EDITION

HAWAII
is heaven
on earth
(and it's never been
easier to get there)

TEXAS
IT'S THE REAL DEAL

48
HOURS
IN CHICAGO

Soaking up
the sun in
FLORIDA
Record growth for the Sunshine State

travelbook

FEATURE

the state. "Canadians understand the Florida product," said Phipps.

Canadians, like the Germans, are designated 'Destination Plus' by Visit Florida, he added. Visitors from both countries like to get out and see every corner of the state. "The Germans are natural travellers, they're inquisitive. Canadians like to have a home base, but they like to explore."

Visit Florida sees growth potential with the Baby Boomers and their bucket lists.

"These are the Canadians who have spent 27 years vacationing in Ft. Myers, who say 'I've always wanted to go to Key West.'"

Millennials are another huge market for Visit Florida – and for travel agents. "Millennials like to travel in groups. It's easier for them to talk to a travel agent and book as a group. The agent becomes the coordinator for the group. Millennials are showing the biggest increase in our travel agent subset."

So what's new in Florida? A long list of new and renovated hotels and resorts are keeping accommodation options fresh. Condos and vacation homes are also increasingly popular. And attractions like I-Drive 360 with its 122-metre Orlando Eye observation wheel will soon dazzle visitors.

HOTELS

There's no shortage of hotel news coming out of Fort Lauderdale.

The 290-room beachfront Conrad Fort Lauderdale Resort is getting a \$34 million upgrade including a Conrad Spa, swimming pool and exclusive oceanfront dining experience.

Beachwalk Resort is scheduled to open this spring along the Intracoastal Waterway in Hallandale Beach, with 216 resort units.

1. Miami, 2. St. Augustine, 3. Rendering of villas at Disney's Polynesian Village Resort, 4. Family Ln.



The Courtyard by Marriott Fort Lauderdale East has re-opened with newly renovated rooms and a new lobby.

And the new \$147 million, 349-room, Margaritaville Hollywood Beach Resort opens this summer on the Broadwalk as one of the first resorts to span the Intracoastal Waterway and the beach. It will feature seven restaurants/bars, multiple pools, full-service St. Somewhere Spa, double surf wave rider, and 30,000 square feet of flexible function space.

In Daytona Beach, the Hard Rock Hotel Daytona Beach expected to be complete in late 2016, with 250 rooms. The historic Streamline Hotel, an art deco-style property, is scheduled to open as an upscale boutique property later in 2015. And The Desert Inn, an oceanfront hotel with roots from decades past, is currently undergoing a full-scale re-style, and is expected to open as a high-end Westin in 2015.

Over on the Gulf coast, more than 1,000 rooms are planned for Clearwater Beach alone, according to the St. Petersburg/Clearwater Area CVB.

The two biggest projects are in Clearwater Beach where the 230-room beachfront Opal Sands Resort, sister property to the Sandpearl, is set to open in spring 2016.

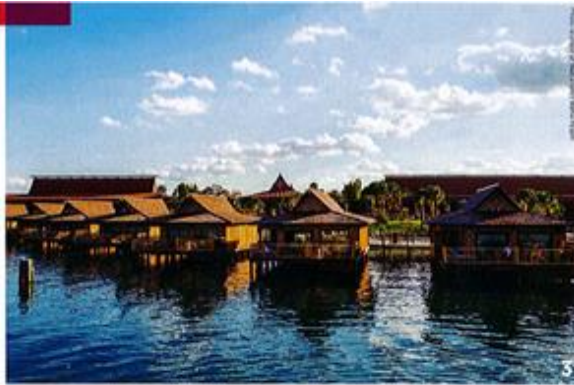
Down the road The Wyndham Grand Resort has also broken ground. With 450 rooms in two towers it will be Clearwater Beach's biggest property.

Farther south, Ocean Properties (the group behind Opal Sands and Sandpearl) is planning a 77-room Gulf-front luxury resort in Treasure Island. In downtown St. Pete, a 174-room Hyatt is in the works.

There's plenty of resort activity in central Florida too.

The new Loews Sapphire Falls Resort is scheduled to open at Universal Orlando in summer 2016, with 1,000 rooms and suites.

Disney's Polynesian Resort is getting a makeover and is now called Disney's Polynesian Village Resort. Refurbished guestrooms, an all-new childcare area (rebranded as Lilo's Playhouse), a completely renovated Nanea Volcano feature pool area, a new children's water play area, and an enlarged deck to accommodate poolside seating are all part of the plan for 2015.



ATTRACTIONS

The Orlando Eye observation wheel will offer breathtaking views of Central Florida in all directions within fully enclosed, air-conditioned glass capsules, and is the heart of the new I-Drive 360 complex, scheduled to open May 4. I-Drive 360 will

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

Think you know Florida? The Sunshine State is full of hidden gems, even for frequent visitors.

Sleep with the Fishes

Guests have to scuba dive to get to Jules' Undersea Lodge near Key Largo. The 600-square-foot cottage has hot showers, a kitchen and comfortable beds against windows where guests can watch fish swim by as they drift off to sleep.

Fly Like an Eagle

Wallaby Ranch in Davenport. Polk County was the



also include a Madame Tussauds and SEA LIFE Orlando as well as numerous shopping and dining options.

Walt Disney World Resort has broken ground on a three-year expansion of Downtown Disney, turning the popular district into Disney Springs. Slated to open in 2015, Disney Springs will feature The Landing, a thriving commercial

Daytona International Speedway and minutes from famous Daytona Beach.

Daytona Beach is also getting a new outlet mall thanks to Tanger Outlets. And Sawgrass Mills continues to expand with 30 new stores and dining options coming in 2016 to the open-air luxury Colonnade Outlets at Sawgrass Mills in Sunrise, FL, a short drive from Fort Lauderdale.