

SUMMER TRAVEL GUIDE

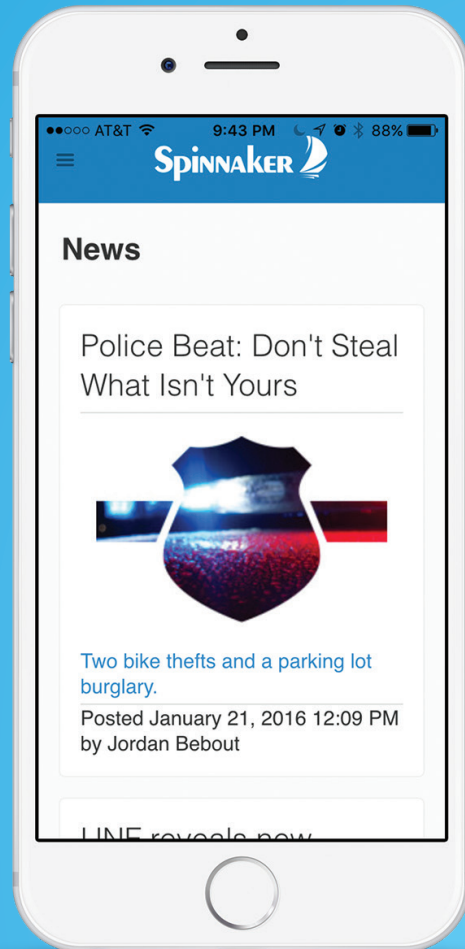


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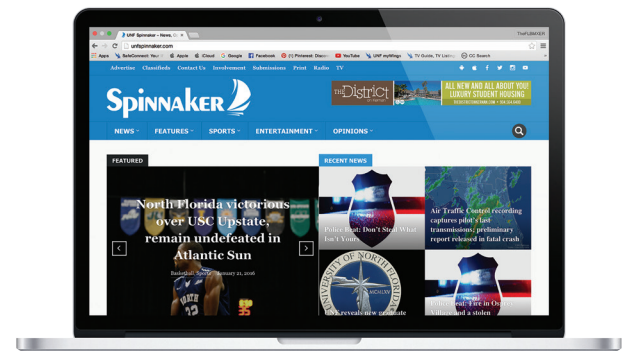


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ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO GET AROUND JAX

CHANGE THE WAY YOU TRAVEL

Words and images by [Tizianna Onstead](#) | [OneTankMedia Writer](#)

1 WATER TAXI

Not every city has a beautiful stretch of water flowing through its downtown, so why not take advantage of it? Experience the city life on the water and take a water taxi. Admire the downtown skyline from its painted reflection on the glossy top of the St. Johns River. Water taxis run every 30 minutes, but unlike pricey fares on land, riders save money by taking it. One-way trips are \$5 for adults and \$3 for kids, and a roundtrip is only two more bucks. Instead of paying for better parking at a Jacksonville Jaguar Football game, pay for a better tailgate that starts during the ride over to the Everbank Field.

2 SEGWAY

It may not have been the first method of transportation you had in mind, but it is a fun way to get around. “A lot of times (riders) are leery about it,” said Jay Cannon, manager of Segway Tours by the Sea in St. Augustine, “but when I pick them up they are the ones that want to buy one.” Cannon has riders from 8 years old to 88, and he said even though the younger users pick it up quickly, it’s not long before the adults are feeling as if they are kids again. Ride along St. Augustine Beach with Tours by the Sea, glide around the city’s historic downtown with a tour guide from St. Augustine Segway Tour, or take on the trail of Kingsley Plantation with Amelia Island’s Ecotour.

3 BOATS

With the Atlantic Ocean on one side, the Gulf of Mexico on the other and all the winding rivers in between, these natural roadways are equipped for driving — just not by car. When there is no reason to rush, travel by boat for a luxurious getaway or as a simple way to get around. It’s a destination within itself, but there’s plenty to visit too. Dock at the various fish camps and restaurants along the St. Johns River and Intercoastal for a meal on the water. Experience nature that lives in the surrounding marsh or at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens, where admission is free to anyone who visits by boat. Florida isn’t land locked, so why live like it is?

4 SKYWAY

There may not be flying cars in 2016, but the

Jacksonville Skyway is close enough. The futuristic ride provided by Jacksonville Transportation Authority runs downtown with several stations in some of the most popular metropolitan areas on the south and north banks. Instead of paying for parking, users can hop on and off the Skyway hassle free and at no cost. “It is stressful to drive,” said Leigh Ann Rassler, Public Relation Manager for JTA. “When you take public transportation you can read a book, work, relax, text your friends.” The Skyway makes a stop at the stations every three to six minutes from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

5 BIKES

When traveling by bike, it doesn’t matter where you start or where you end: the true experience is the ride in between. If you don’t own one, rent one. Pedal down neighborhood backroads, through wooded trails or along the water. Go by yourself or ride with company. Whether it’s under the sun or the stars, biking can allow riders to experience familiar places in a brighter light and visit other areas they never thought they’d see. Don’t limit your travels, even if it’s by bike.

6 HORSE & CARRIAGE

Some methods of travel just need a pair of reins and carrots. In St. Augustine, horses can take riders back in time in a horse-drawn carriage. Stroll through the oldest city in Florida and admire the history left behind on a narrated tour or admire the silence and company on a romantic date. Call it old fashioned, but there’s no reason to rush something that takes time. The horses trot at the perfect pace to engage in the 450 years of coquina and stone displayed during the ride.

7 FERRY

The St. Johns River Ferry has been key for travelers fording the river in Mayport since 1874, and it isn’t going anywhere now. Cars, bikes, people, pets, it’s all loaded on the boat to transport from the south to the north side of state road A1A, and vice versa. Rather than the 28-mile drive through the city and over the Dames Point Bridge, the St. Johns River Ferry cuts that travel time from 45 minutes to 15. President of Friends of the St. Johns River Ferry, Rich Redick,

said if it wasn’t for the ferry, he would have probably never known of Amelia Island. “(The ferry) should be available for people to make those connections between those two points,” said Redick. “There are economic reasons, there are recreational reasons and there are just (reasons) of taking a drive along the coast line of this beautiful part of old Florida.”

8 ROLLERBLADES

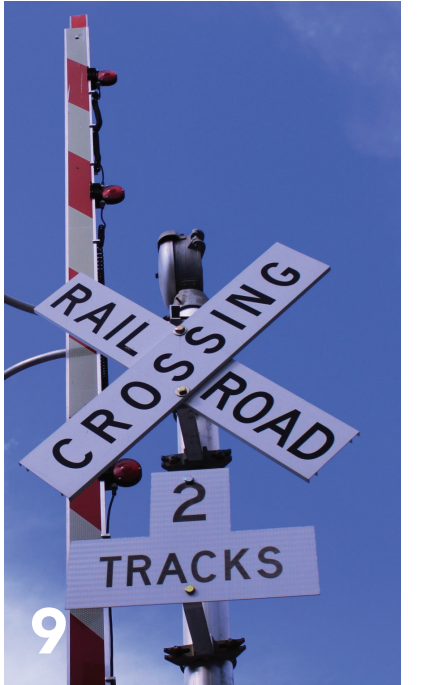
Heeleys came and went but skates are a trend that will never die. Whether you uses rollerskates or rollerblades, both are more than just a hobby or sport. Jacksonville Beach local, Tracell Cage, has a car and a bike, but rollerblades almost everywhere. “I rollerblade to work, my house, parks, at the beaches,” said Cage. “Early in the morning or in the afternoon I love it. It’s nice, it’s really fun and it’s great exercise.” Parking could be an issue for many types of transportation, but Cage said not with rollerblades because you can bring or put them anywhere. Rollerblading is an exciting way to exercise while getting from point A to point B.

9 AMTRAK TRAIN

Save gas and the environment. Amtrak Trains are an ecofriendly transportation that take less energy and burn less pollutants than cars and airplanes. Hogwarts isn’t one of the stops, but Orlando and Gainesville are among the 29 cities in Florida with train stops. Exploring shouldn’t be stressful, and the train’s features makes sure it isn’t. Take a nap in the quiet car, eat something besides the cliché peanuts in the café car, or become mesmerized by the unique view.

10 NIGHT TROLLEY

Steering free of heights and the water? Or just don’t want to steer at all? JTA provides two trolleys on two sides of town so you can keep two feet on the ground. The Jacksonville Beach and Riverside Avondale trolleys allow passengers to travel with no restraints and take in the most within the areas. JTA’s public relations manager, Leigh Ann Rassler, said the cable car look-alike differs from city buses by their décor, routes and riding atmosphere. “(The trolleys) are more for the community and neighborhoods,” said Rassler. “It really has its own feel.”



THE QUEST FOR CRAFT BEER

Words and images by Mark Judson | OneTankMedia Writer

A pilgrimage can help a person find spiritual or philosophical enlightenment. In a town with an ever-growing craft beer scene, deep understanding can come in a slightly unusual form. Jacksonville residents looking to find this inner wisdom, with a hint of hops, can journey the Jax Ale Trail.

The Ale Trail takes its beer pilgrims on a self-guided tour of the city's eight microbreweries, spanning from Orange Park to Jacksonville Beach. A passport is available for free at each of the destinations and contains the journey's roadmap, though the route you take is your decision.

"The Trail's been a cool excuse for people who wouldn't normally head to our side of town to come and check it out," explains Alex Leuthold, a bartender at Intuition Ale Works. "[Riverside] has such a different vibe than the Beach, so a lot of people get stuck on one side of town, but that's changing now and people are starting to explore Jax a lot more. This is our way to contribute to that."

Upon ordering a beer, pilgrims receive a stamp in their passports, one for each brewery. Completion of the trail, which is not recommended in a single day, awards you a Jax Ale Trail koozie and T-shirt.

Some believe the real reward is the experience and right of passage to completing the official trail.

"I've been to each [brewery] before, but my cousins were in town and they're into craft beer as much as I am," said Kacie Gaddis, a recent Ale Trail finisher. "So, doing the trail seemed like a better idea than just popping into one or two. It didn't feel like we were just heading to the bar. We had this quest feeling because we wanted to hit them all in one day."

Although quality, craft beer is certainly the focus of the Ale Trail, each brewery highlights unique character and charm that offers pilgrims more than a simple bar hop.

Military history and patriotism come alive at Veterans United Craft Brewery,

unusually located in a Southside business park. A newcomer to the Jacksonville craft beer scene, Veterans United was founded by military veterans and keeps this tradition alive. The taproom features memorabilia from each branch of the military and appropriately named beers such as "Scout Dog 44" and "Buzzin' Bee."

Pinglehead Brewing in Orange Park offers beers with an optional side of pizza. The brewery's parent company, Brewer's Pizza, is a family-run pizzeria dating back to the Prohibition era.

Across the river in San Marco, beer pilgrims will find Aardwolf Brewing in an easy-to-miss building. The facility is a renovated icehouse built in the 1920s and features most of the original brick walls from the building's past.

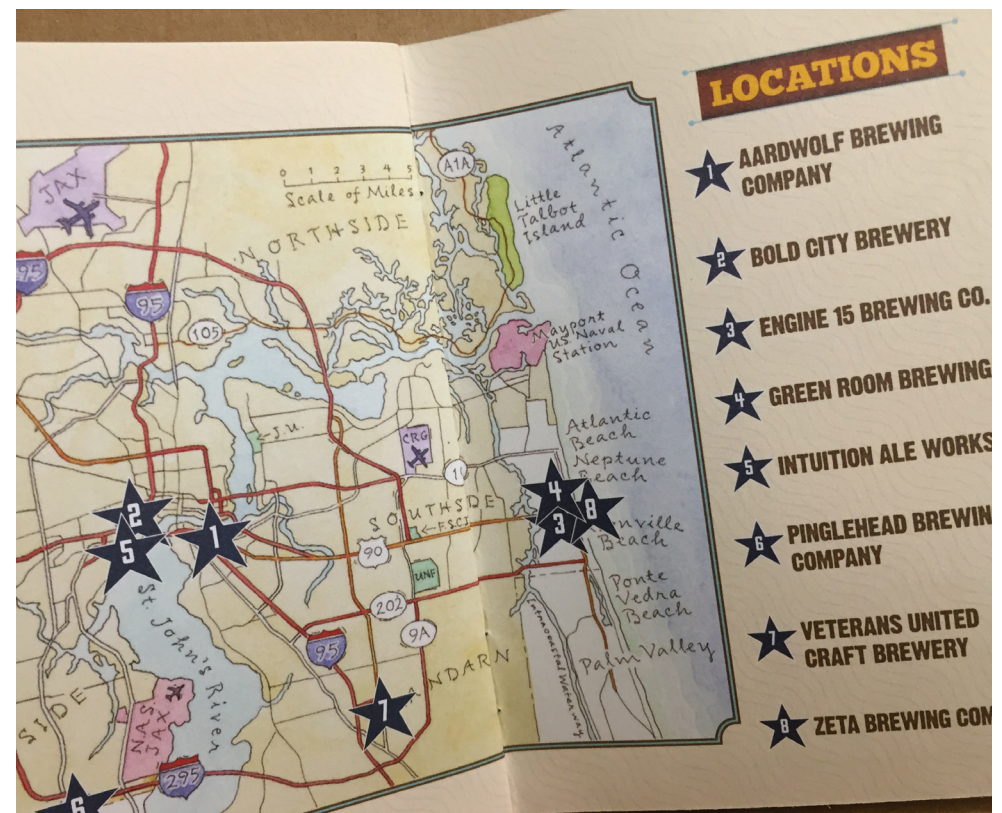
Head to the King Street District in Riverside and you'll find Bold City Brewery and Intuition Ale Works. Each of these Jacksonville craft kings can be found in an industrial setting, around the corner from one another.

Jacksonville Beach features a trio of breweries in Engine 15, Green Room and Zeta. Grab a bite to eat on the patio at Zeta, which is only steps from the ocean, and walk over to Green Room for ping-pong and giant Jenga. A quick drive, or bike ride, down the road will lead you to Engine 15 and its vintage arcade.

"My buddy and I are making a weekend out of the Trail," said Addison Mendoza, a local resident on the Ale Trail. "I've been real big on craft beer lately and haven't been to some of the beach breweries. I never knew [Engine 15] had an arcade, complete game changer."

Quality beers served by the brewers themselves in unique atmospheres are the demand of a locally focused city. The Jax Ale Trail offers an experience for those fed up with tasteless beer at a boring, standard bar.

Your craft beer pilgrimage awaits.



JAXSONS NIGHT MARKET

Words and images by Helen Mas | [OneTankMedia Writer](#)



“

A MORE TONED-DOWN SCENE
COMBINED WITH AN EQUALLY
LIVELY AND ECLECTIC CROWD
ALLOWS JAXSONS NIGHT
MARKET TO MAKE ITS SIGNATURE
MARK ON JACKSONVILLE

The faint yet familiar, fresh-out-of-the-pot smell of coffee from downtown Jacksonville’s Maxwell House coffee plant slowly faded as the night grew older.

In its place now was an even headier mix of smells.

The aroma of freshly baked brownies and home-made chocolate chip cookies delicately lingered in the cool January air, as well as the invigorating scent of cuisine from far-away lands that steamed from the Fusion Food Truck, a locally owned food truck business based on Indian, Thai and Mediterranean cooking.

It was enough to make anyone hungry for more.

It’s an ambiance that many Jacksonville locals are fond of whenever they visit downtown during an event night, and Jaxsons Night Market is no exception.

Held every third Thursday of the month from 5:30 to 9 p.m., rain or shine, Jaxsons Night Market is one of the newest monthly events to hit downtown Jacksonville. Presented by Community First Credit Union, the event launched in mid-April of 2014 as a “curated market,” adding yet another chance for excitement to the growing list of downtown happenings.

It’s hardly a secret whenever there’s an event

going on in downtown Jacksonville, yet Jaxsons Night Market has maintained a relatively low profile.

Hundreds, sometimes thousands of people trek to the heart of downtown every month to experience one-of-a-kind nights, ranging from the popular Art Walk every first Wednesday of the month to the One Spark Festival every spring to the four-day Jacksonville Jazz Festival every May.

However, a more toned-down scene combined with an equally lively and eclectic crowd allows Jaxsons Night Market to make its signature mark on Jacksonville. It gives locals the opportunity to experience an exciting art- and music-filled evening downtown with plenty of both local favorite and up-and-coming musicians as well as food and fashion vendors.

“I would definitely come back to the night market to hang out just because it is a fun and relaxed atmosphere with good street food [vendors],” said Amanda Luu, a recent Jaxsons Night Market attendee.

Visitors can expect a variety of food trucks, beer vendors, local farmers and local musicians and artists to be gathered around Hemming Park, the city’s oldest public square, and sprawled out throughout the colorful, tree-lined streets, bringing an enticing and thrilling nightlife to downtown Jacksonville.

Joy Crawford, the founder and owner of the 5 Points Candle Company, has been displaying and selling her products at Jaxsons Night Market since October 2014.

A young and eclectic Art Walk crowd pours out of the North Laura and West Monroe Street corner of Hemming Park

“It’s a nice area to have the market,” Crawford said. “We see a lot of families that come down there, we see a lot of professionals who are getting off work that come down there, [and we see] people who live downtown that come down there, so it’s a good mix of people.”

Warm, golden lights hung from the tree branches around the park like sparkling jewelry, giving the atmosphere around the first Jaxsons Night Market of the year a unique, mellow vibe — the perfect spot for a relaxing night out after an exhausting day at work or a grueling class at school.

Dozens of people huddled at each vendor area.

Some stood near the clothing vendors and jewelry designers, admiring bright-colored, handmade crotchet bathing suits and delicately crafted earrings. Others sat at the Hemming Café’s round tables under ruby umbrellas drinking craft beers from the Hemming Park Beer Garden and listening to the local musicians.

“I just like all the people who are out here, and there’s always great food to choose from which is really awesome,” said Jordyn Dines, a local vendor and owner of Gypsy Soul Trinkets and Trade. “[There’s] good beer too!”

If you haven’t been to Jaxsons Night Market, go. It’s an event that any Jaxson — a Jacksonville local, hence the name of the event — would quickly recognize as a hidden gem of downtown nightlife. JAXSONS NIGHT MARKET

SO YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW JAX

Words and images by Helen Mas | OneTankMedia Writer



The 310-mile-long St. Johns River disappeared into the horizon and gave way to a cerulean sky lightly scattered with fluffy, silver-lined clouds.

Spectators pointed in awe at the various little details in the scenery — seemingly small, but only because the southern and western views provided by the former Skyline restaurant on the Bank of America Tower in downtown Jacksonville was over 600 feet above the rest of the world.

It was a breathtaking sight of the vast River City that most people normally wouldn't see, yet there I was, lucky enough to witness it with my own eyes thanks to Jacksonville's Top to Bottom Walking Tour.

Part of Jacksonville's Walking Tours, the almost two-hour-long excursion is offered every Tuesday and Thursday from 10

a.m. to 11:45 a.m. in downtown Jacksonville by AdLib Luxury Tours and Transportation.

For \$15, visitors get a tour of downtown's most unique and well-hidden features including a secret underground tunnel, a stop inside of the stunning Florida Theatre and an elevator ride up 42 floors to the Skyline in the Bank of America Tower for one of the most astonishing views of the land that is Jacksonville. Dressed head-to-toe in an elegant maroon ensemble, Paula Griesbach, the group's leading tour guide, softly whispered to the other visitors, directing their gazes out onto the endless landscape and recounting historical stories of the many local iconic structures in their view, including the one in which we were all standing.

"It was the largest bank in Florida,"

said Griesbach, referring to the Bank of America Tower's early days as the headquarters for Barnett Bank. "It was bought out by Nations Bank and Nations Bank was bought out by Bank America."

The merger finally created Bank of America.

As I wandered closer to the window, I noticed my breath fogging up the glass. It was one of the first major stops of the Tuesday tour, and I could feel the excitement building up inside me.

I wanted to see more.

The tour began with everyone meeting at the bottom of The Jacksonville Landing escalators, and although my welcome was warm, I found myself the odd one out: young, local and unaccompanied, surrounded by four older couples, Griesbach and

another Top to Bottom tour guide named Laura Reardon.

I felt like an anthropologist submerged in an aging-tourist subculture.

And like an anthropologist reaching the end of her research, I came out of the tour having learned a thing or two about the very city I'd been living in and exploring for almost a decade — a city I thought I already knew.

"It's so many times you drive through a city and go 'Oh, nice! Old building, old building, next!'" said Reardon. "You don't know the history behind it, so it's really good to learn a little bit of that."

The hard, chilly wind and bright rays of sunshine hit our faces as we walked out of The Jacksonville Landing.

Gripping her burgundy, floral hat



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tightly away from the wind's thieving hands, Griesbach led us to the shiny, black statue of a 19th-century man mounted on a rearing horse just several yards away.

"Why Jacksonville?" Griesbach asked when explaining to us the story behind the city's name. When no one answered, she pointed at the statue of the man on the horse.

"Well, because at the time, the big war hero was Andrew Jackson," she said.

Whether you're a local or not, Jacksonville's Top to Bottom Tour shines a whole new light on the city, giving its guests a view unlike any other on this growing metropolis.

Stop after stop, I continually found myself wondering how in the world I knew so little about the rich history that made

Jacksonville the city it is today, from the Great Fire of 1901 that destroyed 146 city blocks of downtown to its early days as the movie industry's pre-Hollywood filming destination.

Every building, every bridge and every road had its own story; each played an important part in the rise and development of this ever-growing southern city.

As a local, I found it hard to believe that I would exit the tour having listened to stories about Jacksonville I hadn't heard before. As a university student, however, I knew the possibility to learn something new was always present, no matter what and no matter where.

Although I knew many of the ins and outs of this vibrant city, nothing ever truly satisfied my desire for more knowledge

on its history. Luckily, however, I had Jacksonville's Top to Bottom Tour to fill that void.

The tour ended at the base of the Wells Fargo building with everyone gathered around and talking, delighted in their discovery of this understated yet fascinating city sitting right beneath their noses.

"I've lived here since 1998 and couldn't have told you anything about the history of Jacksonville," said Reardon after the tour group members finished their discussion.

"People do not visit their own cities. When you go on vacation, you tour those cities — that's what people do," Griesbach said. "So, invest in your own downtown — you've got a neat one."

FARM-TO-TABLE, GARDEN-TO-GLASS

Words and images by Tiziana Onstead | [OneTankMedia Writer](#)

Delicately textured leaves floated to the bottom of the glass as its bright green color reflected on the surrounding translucent walls. Lime was squeezed over the unraked pile and soaked into every crevice before muddled into tattered pieces.

Submerged under countless pours and shaken with ice to the beat of the surround sound, the once thin sheets of nature became animated specks that danced as one with the new concoction.

But even after such transformation, the mint's sharp aroma escaped the rim with liveliness as if it were just plucked from a recently flowered stem — which it was.

The following philosophy of the San Marco bar, Grape and Grain Exchange, applies to everything it serves: straight from “garden to glass.” Using newly grown ingredients to create drinks that arouse taste buds, you would think this should be a secret the owners, Bob Smith and Jackson Somphonphakdy, would take to their grave. But it's not, and neither is the bookshelf inside that hides an additional entrance to their second lounge, The Parlour.

The bars may be separately run with different atmospheres, and drink menus, but they're owned by the same guys and recognized for the same concept: crafting drinks with technique and fresh, local products.

They aren't using an orange garnish or umbrella straw to enhance a popular drink. The Grape and Grain Exchange and The Parlour are using unique components to turn an original into something your palates will crave.

“You're getting regular mint from your grocery [store] when we're getting some fancy, chocolate pineapple mint,” Somphonphakdy said. “That's definitely going to have a different flavor profile and it does make our drink a lot better.”

It's flavor like chocolate pineapple mint and high-quality that's motivating numerous bars and restaurants throughout Jacksonville, and around the country, to join the movement, farm-to-table — a culinary practice that means just that.

Ranging from Grape and Grain Exchange and Black Sheep to Orsay, Moxie Kitchen, and The Kitchen in San Marco, each place is serving up dishes from unique menus that revolve solely around local, farm-grown products.

“We just wanted to give our guest the best products, the best ingredients that we can,” Somphonphakdy said. “Sourcing it from farms was the best option that we found.”

And it's products like these that you won't find on a corporate distributor's semi.

According to research from the Iowa State University, the farmed food transported by large distribution companies travel about 1,518 miles till it reaches consumers.

Farm-to-table skips the everlasting process of products purchased by manufactures, packaged at a warehouse, picked up by a wholesaler and shipped to the retailer. Instead, bartenders and chefs are linking up with local farms one day and serving the herbs, vegetables, fruit, dairy and meats hours later.

It's a process that allows them and their customers to not only know where the ingredients are coming from and how fresh they are, but it enables them to source products that aren't delivered in a grocery store.

Grape and Grain Exchange doesn't use common cocktail components and sourcing the products from farms themselves allows the bar to include ingredients anywhere from chocolate habanero peppers to any type of edible flower. Having this type of availability

also allows Grape and Grain Exchange to make its own in-house simple syrups and bitters.

“We are willing to work with anything that has a flavor profile,” Somphonphakdy said. “We look more for quality in ingredients with really great flavors.”

Farm-to-table is on the rise, but that doesn't mean it's new. The idea dates back to the '70s when organic food was trending among hippies and menus were inspired by farmers' markets. Decades later, it's still a concept that local chefs in the area relate to and use.

A few minutes away from the Grape and Grain Exchange, a Riverside restaurant is almost always a packed house. Offering an open, triangular rooftop patio, customers can enjoy the sky transition from oranges and pinks during sunset to a dark blanket of glimmering stars all the while eating products that were grown under the same evening sky.

The Black Sheep restaurant provides a modern atmosphere filled with hospitality to its customers, as well as delicious, seasonal plates that originate from the strong relationships built between owner and chef, Jonathon Insetta, and executive chef, Waylon Rivers and their local farmers.

“If I ever see somebody in the market, over at the Riverside arts market I'll approach them,” Rivers



said. “And let him know that we are interested and start a relationship that way. That relationship that then flourishes like the crops on the farm. Rivers said that being an established restaurant helps, but having a personal relationship with the farmers enables the restaurant to thrive even more, delivering small, fresh batches of ingredients on a daily basis.

“Like Black Hog Farm, I texted him last night, he’ll be here today,” Rivers said. “So in the matter 12 hours I can have a delivery of fresh eggs, chickens, all kinds of produce.”

The restaurant will not serve anything that doesn’t support its local and fresh standards and won’t turn to a grocery store when it’s out of stock or season. As the weather changes, so does the menu, and this is something the Black Sheep kitchen takes advantage of.

“I love seasonal cooking, you know. I love what’s available to you, it’s almost an easier aspect,” Rivers said. “A good saying is ‘what grows together goes together,’ and we use that a lot.”

Farm-to-table is not only helping create high quality food in the culinary industry, but contributes to the growth of local farmers and the Jacksonville community.

In the business world someone always wants to be on top, but Black Sheep sees no competition in more farm-to-table restaurants.

“We are not about being the only good restaurant or trying to be one of the only restaurants in Jacksonville,” Rivers said. “It’s a scene that we are all very supportive of each other.”

The movement is allowing restaurants and bars to serve a menu it stands behind, but farms are not getting the short end of the stick.

According to the CNN affiliated website, Eatocracy, farmers end up making only about 16 cents for every dollar spent by chain distributors. The rest is spent on everything from the diesel used during the delivery, the cost of storage at the warehouse, the satellite tracking the shipments, to the forklifts removing the food from the semi.

That is 84 cents going anywhere but the farmer’s pocket. With more and more local businesses using farm-to-table, it’s not only increasing the farmer’s pay, but advertising the farms and products for current and future chefs and bartenders to use.

“You are backing local people who are in your community who you live with on a day-to-day basis,” Rivers said. “You’re not backing up a corporation who has a CEO that’s driving because they have to push their company for profits.”

Farm-to-table is an awareness that illuminates all the great things Jacksonville has to offer.

It’s a movement that promises Grape and Grain Exchange’s famous cocktail, Kale Ale, to return every September and Black Sheep’s popular entrée, Black Hog Farm Chicken, to remain with seasonally changing sides.

It’s food that is appreciated by the farmer, chef, bartender and customer. “It’s about doing something that you believe in,” Rivers said. “And [something that] fits in line with what you do on a daily basis.”



Grape and Grain Exchange’s cocktail, Bebop and Rocksteady, is garnished with a fresh sprig of mint.



Black Sheep’s brunch dish, Grilled Country Ham Tartine is topped with a fried egg from Black Hog Farm in Palatka.

ST. AUGUSTINE: LEAVING THE LION'S DEN

Words and images by [Justin Belichis](#) and [Connor Spielmaker](#) | [OneTankMedia Writers](#)

You won't find anyone dressed like a conquistador on Anastasia Boulevard.

In St. Augustine, the Bridge of Lions marks the divide between tourists confined to a 16th Century aesthetic and locals at the beach watching bands or singing karaoke at dive bars. Travelers searching to immerse themselves in the city's local culture should look across the Matanzas River, where the food and sights are different from the tourist-centered world on the other side.

As in much of Florida, it all begins at the beach.

St. Augustine Beach, located south of the city center on State Road 312, is a two-and-a-half mile stretch of khaki-colored sand tucked underneath the Atlantic Ocean's shoreline. A 7 a.m., sunrise amplifies the sky's color with citrus hues, like pouring orange juice in an empty glass.

Visitors with trucks can drive right from asphalt to grains of sand for a brisk ride down the beach with the windows down. The beach also serves as natural flatland for exercise like running or yoga.

Further north on a club-shaped spit of land jutting into the Atlantic Ocean is the pristine Anastasia State Park. Here, beach driving is prohibited. Instead the white sands are preserved in a natural state, with dunes and swaying sea oats serving as a protective barrier.

"What's great about our park is that it's three and a half miles of pristine beach. There's areas you can go and you won't see a building or structure," said Park Manager Warren Poplin.

It's \$4 to \$10 per vehicle to enter the park, which is home to 1,600 acres of natural preserve teeming with scenic views for savoring or taking selfies. The park also features remnants of coquina quarries, which 300 years ago would have been teeming with workers mining and hauling the shells for use in constructing buildings in St. Augustine.

For more than just a view, Anastasia State Park also offers its visitors with activities like hiking the Ancient Dunes Nature Trail, camping and fishing spots. The St. Augustine Amphitheater is a short walk or bike ride away from Anastasia State Park, where musicians like Robert Plant and



Had enough of the pristine beach? Turn around and start catching glimpses of the iconic St. Augustine Lighthouse, and other downtown rooftops.



Climb the 219 steps to the top of the St. Augustine Lighthouse and behold a 360 ° degree view from the top. To the west, historic downtown, and to the east are those beautiful beaches.

Aretha Franklin will play next month. The amphitheater also hosts a farmers market every Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

But even on this side of the bridge, St. Augustine's timeless grip on its geography is inescapable. Rewind to the late nineteenth century to find the original St. Augustine Lighthouse, a 140-year-old wooden Spanish watchtower that helped guide ships into harbor.

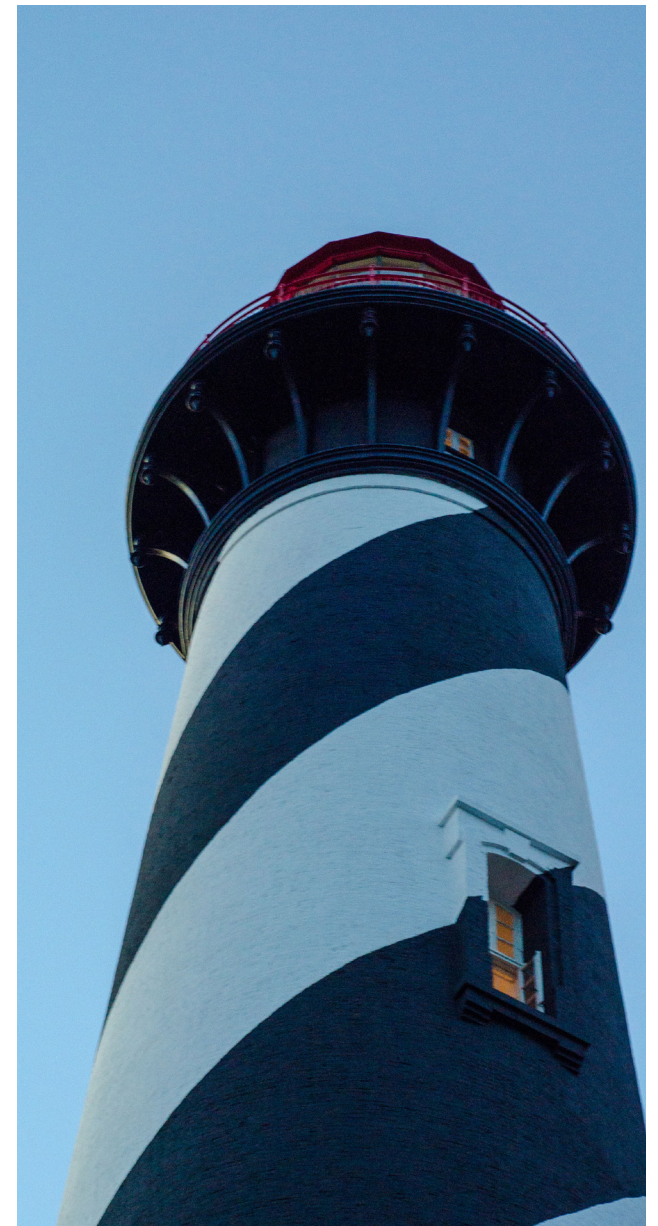
A walk through the square-framed door greets visitors with a spiral staircase, with 219 steps climbing the wall up to the observation deck. On the way, mementos from earlier times will engage curious lighthouse dwellers, including a mock of the bucket full of oil the light keeper would have had to carry up the tedious steps each night. Today, a 1000-watt light bulb drives the beam of light guiding ships safely to harbor.

"I'm a native of St. Augustine, so just within my short lifetime I've seen the Lighthouse go from a sad state of disrepair to this iconic landmark all because the community came together and made it happen," said Shannon O' Neil, director of public relations for the Lighthouse and Museum. "It's a testament to the spirit of this town."

The museum features exhibits that give visitors insight to how a light keeper and their family lived during a post-Civil War period in Florida. Pictures of the lighthouse throughout the years adorn its walls and the light keeper's office is still furnished with desks, chairs and tools like binoculars, locks and keys.

One of the few remnants of tourist activity on this side of the bridge sits on A1A due west of the lighthouse – the St. Augustine Alligator Farm. From tree-hopping Lemurs from Madagascar to a 15-foot, 1,250 pound crocodile named Maximo, the St. Augustine Alligator Farm is home to several internationally diverse creatures. In fact, the farm features over 20 species of crocodilians.

"We're the only zoo in the world that features every type of alligator, and our experience is up close and personal unlike





anything in most of Florida,” said Park Director John Brueggen.

When sunshine and physical activity are combined, hunger is sure to strike. Where St. George and Hypolita streets meet sits Burrito Works Taco Shop, where locality and Mexican food create its quirky menu. “The Mexican UFO,” the restaurant’s best-seller according to its menu, is an amalgamation of cheese, meat, beans, sour cream and other fixings in a pentagon-shaped tortilla.

“Across the Bridge [of Lions], the drinks are cheaper and there’s a much more relaxed, less crowded environment,” said Flagler College senior Walker Jesse. “I’m just trying to have a couple beers, talk with friends and maybe see a show.”

Cory Chavis, when he’s not performing with his band, keeps the meat flowing at Burrito Works Taco Shop. The shop’s sign combines an island feel with the waves you can hear crashing a mere block away. Go out of this world with the Mexican UFO from Burrito Works Taco Shop. The delicious combination of crisp shell, pico de gallo, meat, cheese, and more can’t be missed.

For those who find themselves still wanting to believe, Jesse said he recommends people visit a cafe on the boulevard called Planet Sarbez. In a city that wears historical charm as its uniform, Planet Sarbez stands out. Murals with colorful, abstract geometrical patterns adorn its walls, while punk rock music and the sizzles and smells from the grill fill the air.

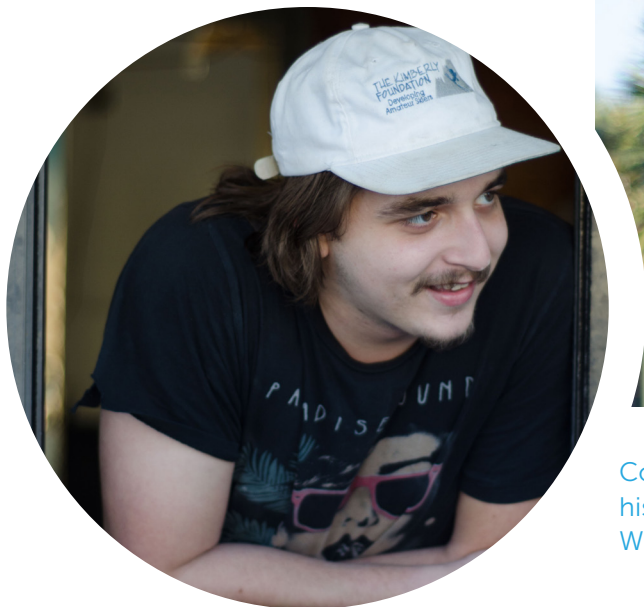
Planet Sarbez features a diverse selection of local and craft beers from companies like Bold City Brewery, Ancient City Brewery and 3 Daughters Brewery. But perhaps the most peculiar items on the menu are its custom grilled cheese sandwiches named

The creativity shines through on the hand-written menu, but just because it isn’t listed here doesn’t mean it can’t be made. Custom is always an option.



The man behind the grill - or at least standing over it. Kitchen manager Mark Garrison is responsible for the menu, and he brought previous experience from his food truck to the uniqueness of PS.

WANT A BASKET
OF BACON WITH
A GRILLED
CHEESE? THAT’S
A THING HERE.



Cory Chavis, when he's not performing with his band, keeps the meat flowing at Burrito Works Taco Shop.

after Power Pangers, which are served until 2 a.m. Monday through Saturday.

Want a basket of bacon with a grilled cheese? That's a thing here.

The man behind the grill — or at least standing over it — kitchen manager Mark Garrison is responsible for the menu, and he brought previous experience from his food truck to the uniqueness of PS. This is just one of the handmade and painted signs that adorn Planet Sarbez, all made or acquired by owner Ryan Kunsch. This bar isn't all about drinks, though. Kitchen Manager Mark Garrison is in charge of all the recipes that go on the board at PS, and here he is prepping the iconic Sarbez Melt. Got to wash down that grilled cheese with something; no worries, PS keeps plenty of popular national chains and local brews on tap.

The Sarbez Melt: Mozzarella cheese, crisp bacon, turkey, and of course Sarbez sauce make up the original, and most popular, grilled cheese. The creativity shines through on the hand-written menu, but just because it isn't listed here doesn't mean it can't be made. Custom is always an option.

The boulevard is also home to local dives like British Pub and Shanghai Nobby's. Travelers with a penchant for seafood can head next door to O'Steen's Restaurant for some fried shrimp, or across the street at Black Fly for a New England clambake.

Though it's only a short step away from downtown, St. Augustine locals seem to pride themselves in being away from the hustle and bustle. The music is louder, the air is lighter and adventure awaits at every turn on the boulevard.

"We have our own character on this side of the bridge," said Planet Sarbez kitchen manager Mark Garrison. "It's cozy."



CUMBERLAND ISLAND: WILD AND UNDEVELOPED

Words and images by Ashley Anderson | OneTankMedia Writer



Above, a wild horse decides to explore the ruins.

A canopy of tall, tangled trees make a patchwork pattern of light and shade all across the ground. The winding branches are covered with Spanish moss and the resurrection fern intertwining, creating myriad twists and turns.

Wild horses roam through the dunes and along undeveloped beaches. Intricate shells are left by the sea all along the shoreline, just waiting to be collected. Behind these regal beaches are giant and extensive sand dunes that eventually lead back into the vibrant green wilderness.

A once fantastic mansion, full of life and vitality, is now nothing more than broken walls and cracked brick that still give fantastic insight into the island's story. Pieces of driftwood linger on the shore and the wind howls, telling stories that are hundreds of years old.

This is Cumberland Island located right off the coast of Georgia. This island that was once home to rich aristocrats and war generals is now open to the public, preserved as a national treasure.

Cumberland Island is 17.5 miles long, with an area of 36,415 acres including 16,850 acres of marsh,

mudflats, and tidal creeks. No cars are allowed on the island except by the owners and approved parks service vehicles.

After 17 years of working on the island, park ranger Pauline Wentworth still finds this island to be something special.

"If I had to choose a place to work this is the ideal thing for me," she said. Originally she wanted to go out to the ocean and do research but she got to the beach and stopped. "It's not just the beach; it's not just the forest; it's everything working together and there is so much variety and diversity out here it is just incredible."

Cumberland Island National Seashore, which is one of 9,800 congressionally designated wildernesses in the United States, features echoes of natives, missionaries, slaves and even wealthy industrialists. They have all been a part of Cumberland's story.

For thousands of years the island was visited by Timucuan Indians. In the 1500s, Spanish friars and soldiers built a Catholic mission and a large fort.

The wild horses on the island can be traced back into the 1700s, although it is believed that they

arrived even earlier, possibly during the Spanish missionary period. The horses on the island today have a genetic makeup that is closely related to several breeds of common domestic horses, which is most likely the result of post-1900 introductions of other animals to the island.

Plum Orchard, built in 1898 by Lucy Carnegie for her son George and his wife, is located almost 8 miles from the Sea Camp dock.

Greyfield was built for Lucy and Thomas Carnegie's daughter, Margaret Ricketson. In 1962 it was opened as The Greyfield Inn by Margaret's daughter, Lucy Ferguson, and her family. To get to Greyfield adventurers take the "Lucy R. Ferguson," a ferry at Fernandina Beach Harbor.

The First African Baptist Church was established in 1893 and then rebuilt in the 1930s. In 1996, John F. Kennedy Jr. and Carolyn Bessette were married at the site. In the 1960s, the Carnegies, joined by other landowners, cooperated with the National Park Foundation to acquire land for public purposes. Finally in 1972, Congress legislated into existence the Cumberland Island National Seashore.



The island, seven miles off of the Georgia coast, is only accessible by boat. On the ride over, first-time Cumberland adventurer and history buff, Monica Reimer prepared for her trip.

Her sister had told her about the island and said that it was the best park around. Reimer was very excited to explore the island, especially Plum Orchard. “I like historical houses,” she said. “It’s where I always go, wherever I am.”

Plum Orchard is currently open to the public. Adventurers can access it by foot, bicycle or the Lands & Legacies tour. Plum Orchard is open when volunteer caretakers are on site and as stop on the Lands & Legacies tour.

Reimer had just recently sold her home and decided to take on the country with her dog in an RV. She is just getting started and has only been as far north as North Carolina but she has big plans to make her way through the west.

For adventurers who want a more accessible trip, a stay at Greyfield could be arranged.

The inn also offers a day-trip option.

Adventurers can ride over on the 9:30 a.m. ferry then enjoy lunch and use the amenities, such as bikes available to rent. Guests can later return on the 3:30 p.m. ferry. The Greyfield Inn is also available inn as

well as lunch and Greyfield Inn was previously chosen as one of the “Top 10 Most Romantic Inns” by American Historic Inns.

According to an inn spokesperson, visitors to the inn love the seclusion as well as the meals it offers. Experienced chefs prepare fresh meals — all containing local ingredients, including vegetables grown at the inn itself.

Adventures are but a stone’s throw away on Cumberland, but with adventure comes a lot of physical activity. In order to fully enjoy the island, adventurers must do a decent amount of walking. However, walking under beautiful meandering trees and rudimentary beaches makes this journey a breeze.

“This is an amazing place. I never realized everything that happened out here on barrier islands,” Wentworth said.

In fact, Cumberland never gets old, no matter how many times you go. The walks are different in different seasons and new facts surface, meaning there is always something new to learn Wentworth said. It offers a peaceful feeling that so many people crave.

If you do go, keep the following information in mind:

Cumberland is located 7 miles east of St. Mary’s, and since is an island, it is only accessible by boat.

A ferry takes you from the visitor center to the island. No cars, kayaks, bikes or pets are allowed on the ferry. In spring/summer/fall (March 1–Sept. 30) the ferry leaves St. Mary’s at 9 a.m. and 11:45 a.m. and departs Cumberland Island at 10:15 a.m., 2:45 p.m. and 4:45 p.m.

In the winter (Dec. 1–Feb. 28) the ferry leaves St. Mary’s at 9 a.m. and 11:45 a.m. and leaves Cumberland Island at 10:15 a.m. and 4:45 p.m. on Thursdays through Mondays.

There is no ferry service on Tuesday and Wednesday. The island does allow private boats and docks are open from sunrise to sunset.

A ride on the Cumberland Queen Ferry is \$25 plus tax for adults, \$23 plus tax for seniors (65 and over) and \$15 plus tax for children (12 years and under).

Campgrounds are accessible and costs an additional \$2 to \$4 per person, depending on where you camp.

Plum Orchard is currently open Thursday–Monday 9a.m.–12p.m. and 1 p.m.–4 p.m. The free tours are offered on the hour and last about 45 minutes.

Greyfield Inn is a luxury hotel on the island. For complete information and reservations visit the website at www.greyfieldinn.com.

Above left is Dungeness, the ruins of the home of the Carnegie family. Above right, the walk from the open beach morphs into a canvas of twisting and turning trees.

LIVE OAK'S SPIRIT OF THE SUWANNEE MUSIC PARK: 'YOUR HAPPY PLACE'

Words and images by Sarah De Nicolais | OneTankMedia Writer



The sun was high in the sky as the sound of music began to fill the air. Young and old adults alike danced their way toward the main stage placed at the front of a large, green field lined with food trucks, art vendors and carnival rides.

Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park is a musical venue that hosts festivals of all genres year round. Located in the heart of Live Oak, the park incorporates the unique beauty of North Florida and park visitors' undying love for music.

Jenny Heup, a veteran to the Spirit of the Suwannee music festivals, said she's always excited when a weekend at the park is coming up.

"It's undeniable that the second you walk onto the park grounds at Suwannee, you are taken away to your happy place. There is something about the combination of the fresh air, the music, the woods," Heup said. "Everyone is happy and

everyone is family. I've been to every festival from bluegrass, to reggae, to EDM. It doesn't matter the genre or the type of people. You are among friends without a care in the world."

In 1985, the Cornett family out of Lexington, Kentucky stumbled upon the music venue that was then owned by Suwannee County. The family, with an extensive background in bluegrass music festival productions, decided to lease the park. They began hosting bluegrass festivals right away and eventually purchased the park in 1997.

Over the years, the music park has evolved into a venue that hosts all types of genres from southern rock and roll to electric dance music artists. Robin Young has worked alongside of James Cornett, the current owner of the park, since 2000.

"Part of it was James' exceptional ability to build

partnerships within the industry. He was able to get Live Nation to come in and host Wane Music Festival, which expanded the genres to more southern rock and roll,” Young said. “The Allman Brothers were partners in creating the festival.”

Wanee Music Festival has been among the park’s most popular events since its conception in 2005, but younger festivals like Aura Music Festival and Suwannee Hulaween have also attracted large crowds over the past few years.

“He’s also built partnerships with new, smaller promoters who are getting into the business and helps to mentor them to learn the business,” Young said. “He did that with Magnolia Fest, which was a small promotional company out of Jacksonville.”

In 1997, Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park hosted its first ever Magnolia Fest. The festival now runs for three days and has five stages featuring all types of music including bluegrass, folk and alternative country. Last year’s headliners were Jacksonville’s own Tedeschi Truck Band and The Avett Brothers.

“One of my most memorable moments at Suwannee was at Magfest in 2015. My friends and I are big fans of Tedeschi Trucks Band,” said Heup. “For one of their last songs, Susan Tedeschi covered ‘With a Little Help From My Friends’ by The Beatles. It was such a nostalgic moment to hear her sing those words while being in my favorite place in the world, surrounded by my best friends. A moment I could re-live forever.”

Young says the main goal of the park is to produce an enjoyable, artistically pleasing outdoor recreational experience for all of Suwannee’s guests, but they also recognize that they can’t do so without the support of their community in Live Oak.

“We’ve made a lot of effort to build good, lasting relationships with the

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organizations of Suwannee county so that we’re partners in building our community. Our park benefits the community in a lot of ways by bringing people to Live Oak,” Young said. “Our community definitely works with us to help these shows continue as well as to grow.”

Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park holds festivals beginning in early March and continue through October each year. With a wide variety of musical genres there’s shows for everyone to enjoy.

Festival tickets are available from day passes around \$50 to weekend passes that include camping ranging from \$130 to \$400. Artists of all different forms attend each festival to display and sell their work, and unique food trucks from all over offer a wide variety of options to keep festival attendees energized for their favorite band’s next set.

The park also offers many different features available when festivals aren’t going on from primitive and horse camping to canoe trips down the Suwannee River. So whether you’re looking for an energetic weekend full of music and arts, or just want to unwind in the quiet tranquility of the woods, there’s something for everyone to enjoy at Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park.

Upcoming 2016 Events:

4/22 – 4/23

Tipper and Friends

4/27 – 4/30

Suwannee River Jam

6/17 – 6/18

Purple Hatter’s Ball

10/13-10/16

Magnolia Festival

Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park also hosts concerts when festivals aren’t taking place. Additionally, the park has karaoke and live music nights weekly.



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