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Travel and Tourism Research Association:  
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2013 Marketing Outlook Forum - Outlook for 2014

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## Best of : Florida Travel Destinations

Levelwing: Digital Marketing Firm

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Digital Marketing Firm, Levelwing., "Best of : Florida Travel Destinations" (2017). *Travel and Tourism Research Association: Advancing Tourism Research Globally*. 8.

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**BEST OF:  
FLORIDA  
TRAVEL  
DESTINATIONS**

**levelwing<sup>®</sup>**

## INTRODUCTION

This report was developed by Levelwing in order to better understand visitor perceptions regarding Florida travel destinations. This research was produced using data obtained through third party conversation aggregation technologies and analyzed using proprietary research methodology.

The report analyzes conversation across numerous social media platforms (e.g., forums, blogs, Facebook and Twitter) with the objective of gaining insight into travelers' reasons for visiting the smaller market destinations throughout Florida. Once the relevant data is mined, the analysis of aggregated conversation is carried out by a dedicated team of analysts using Levelwing's proprietary analytical methods. This analysis uncovers potential opportunities and actionable insights surrounding relevant themes, patterns and trends.

Ten cities with comparable conversation volume across social media platforms were selected for analysis: **Jacksonville, Fort Myers, Tallahassee, Gainesville, Sarasota, Destin, Naples, Pensacola, Vero Beach, and Amelia Island**. The cities were analyzed based upon volume, sentiment and 11 categories of travel interest.

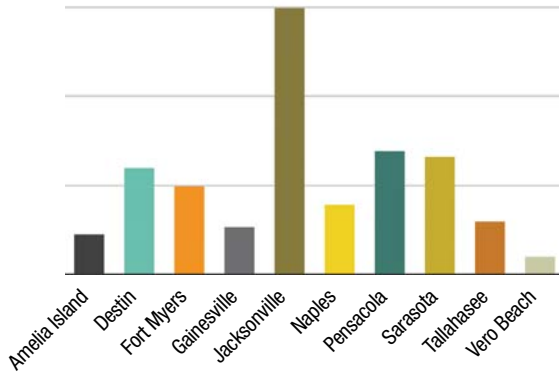
The interest categories are defined as follows:

- Romance – weddings, honeymoons, anniversaries and proposals/engagements, as well as general romance conversation
- Relaxation - Spa services, laying out and general relaxation and leisure activities
- History/Culture – museums, historical sites and festivals
- Adventure/Outdoors – outdoor sports (e.g., fishing, snorkeling and golfing), camping, state parks and nature/wildlife discussion
- Corporate Events – business trips, conferences or corporate events
- Luxury – 4 and 5 star hotels or resorts and spas
- Girls'/Guys' Weekend – bachelor/bachelorette parties, guys' trips, girls' weekends or city nightlife
- Beach – beach discussion, including sand and ocean mentions
- Family Fun – travelers on family vacations or visiting family
- Shopping – area malls or unique shopping locations (e.g., outlets or outdoor shopping)
- Sporting Events – travel for sports-related events (e.g., college or professional football games, MLB spring training)

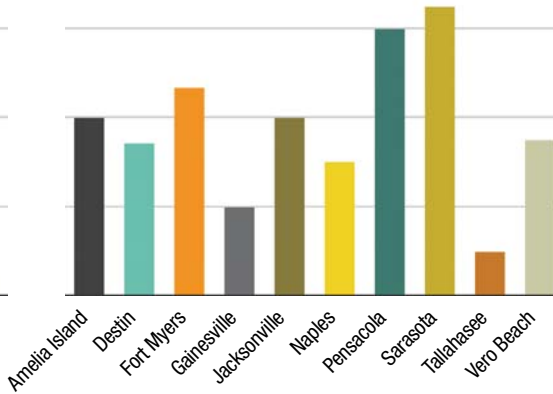
Each city was given an overall top ten ranking, as well as a rank for each interest category. In order to establish these rankings, the Social Research team at Levelwing analyzed conversation volume and sentiment obtained for each category. An algorithm was applied to the volume and sentiment scores to determine how the cities ranked overall and within each of the interest categories. From these calculations, the overall top ten list and top city per travel interest category were established.

## SCORES AND RANKINGS

### SOCIAL CONVERSION VOLUME



### SENTIMENT INDEX SCORE



Sarasota ranked highest in sentiment index score (SIS), with travelers most frequently praising its outdoor activities and relaxation. Pensacola and Fort Meyers were close behind in 2nd and 3rd place for similar reasons, as well as historical and cultural events.



The sentiment index score for all cities generally indicated more positive than negative conversation, most likely reflecting that travelers were excited about the vacations they were discussing.



Tallahassee scored lowest in terms of SIS, which could be attributed to visitors discussing events associated with Florida State University rather than attractions with broader appeal, such as beaches.



Jacksonville surpassed all other cities in conversation volume; however, this did not guarantee a top ranking as it was lower in SIS and category rankings.



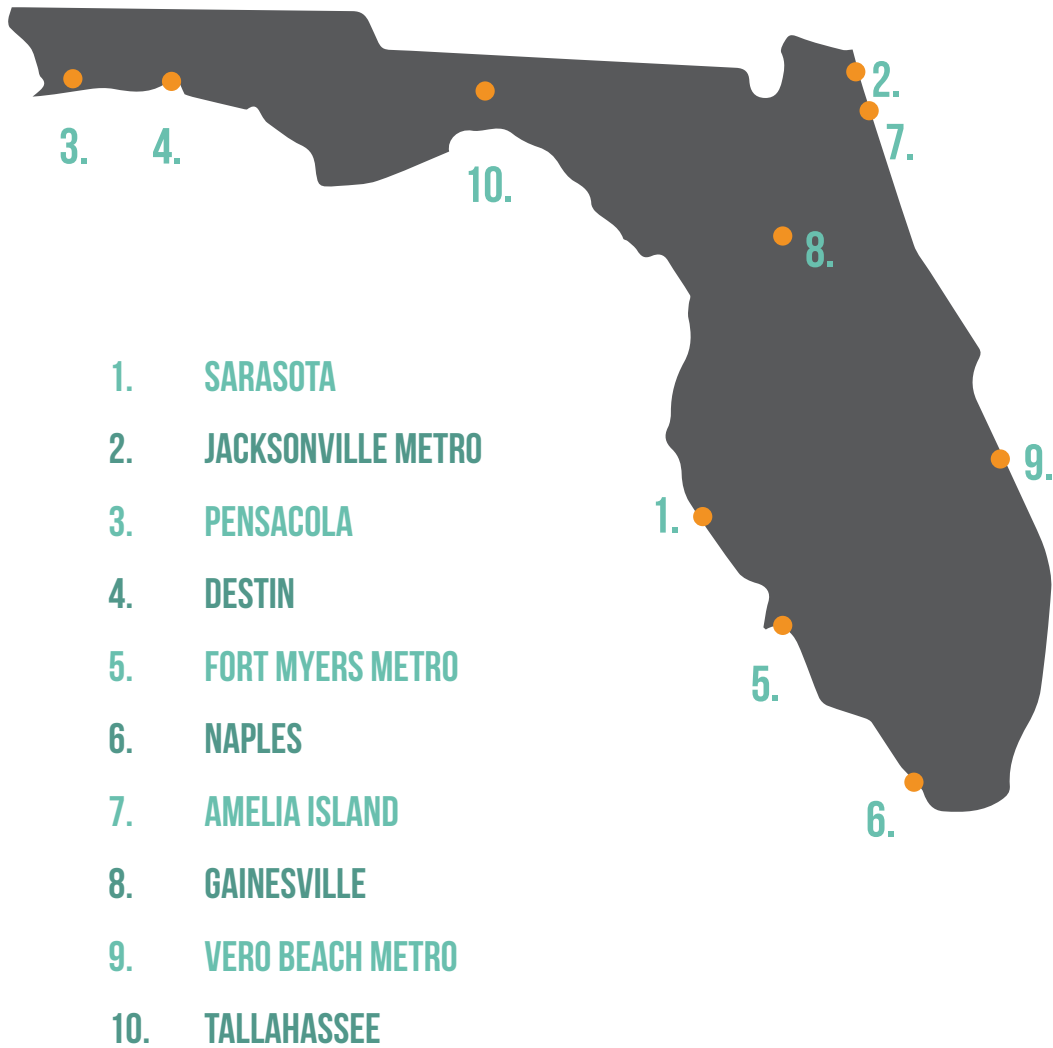
Fort Myers may have come as a surprise as the top sports city over Tallahassee or Gainesville, where college football reigns supreme, but visitors shared their excitement to travel to Fort Myers for Major League Baseball spring training games.



While Amelia Island ranked among the lowest in terms of social conversation, that did not negatively impact its SIS, as most travelers applauded its peaceful atmosphere and beaches, as well as its historical offerings, including the Shrimp Festival on Fernandina Beach and Fort Clinch.

# TOP FLORIDA DESTINATIONS

( OVERALL RANK )



# TOP CITY BY TRAVEL INTEREST



ROMANCE  
JACKSONVILLE



FAMILY FUN  
JACKSONVILLE



RELAXATION  
JACKSONVILLE



HISTORY/CULTURE  
PENSACOLA



ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS  
SARASOTA



CORPORATE EVENTS  
DESTIN



BEACH  
PENSACOLA



LUXURY  
DESTIN



SHOPPING  
DESTIN



GIRLS'/GUYS' WILD WEEKEND  
SARASOTA



SPORTING EVENTS  
FORT MYERS

•Category winners are noted within each city page with the corresponding category icon.

# COMPLETE CATEGORY RANKINGS



## ROMANCE

1. JACKSONVILLE
2. PENSACOLA
3. AMELIA ISLAND
4. DESTIN
5. VERO BEACH
6. TALLAHASSEE
7. SARASOTA
8. NAPLES
9. GAINESVILLE
10. FORT MYERS



## BEACH

1. PENSACOLA
2. SARASOTA
3. DESTIN
4. FORT MYERS
5. AMELIA ISLAND
6. JACKSONVILLE
7. VERO BEACH
8. NAPLES
9. GAINESVILLE
10. TALLAHASSEE



## RELAXATION

1. JACKSONVILLE
2. SARASOTA
3. AMELIA ISLAND
4. NAPLES
5. DESTIN
6. PENSACOLA
7. VERO BEACH
8. FORT MYERS
9. GAINESVILLE
10. TALLAHASSEE



## SHOPPING

1. DESTIN
2. SARASOTA
3. NAPLES
4. JACKSONVILLE
5. AMELIA ISLAND
6. GAINESVILLE
7. FORT MYERS
8. PENSACOLA
9. TALLAHASSEE
10. VERO BEACH



## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS

1. SARASOTA
2. PENSACOLA
3. DESTIN
4. JACKSONVILLE
5. AMELIA ISLAND
6. NAPLES
7. FORT MYERS
8. TALLAHASSEE
9. GAINESVILLE
10. VERO BEACH



## SPORTING EVENTS

1. FORT MYERS
2. SARASOTA
3. JACKSONVILLE
4. PENSACOLA
5. GAINESVILLE
6. TALLAHASSEE
7. VERO BEACH
8. AMELIA ISLAND
9. DESTIN
10. NAPLES

# COMPLETE CATEGORY RANKINGS



## FAMILY FUN

1. JACKSONVILLE
2. PENSACOLA
3. DESTIN
4. AMELIA ISLAND
5. SARASOTA
6. VERO BEACH
7. NAPLES
8. FORT MYERS
9. GAINESVILLE
10. TALLAHASSEE



## LUXURY

1. DESTIN
2. NAPLES
3. SARASOTA
4. FORT MYERS
5. PENSACOLA
6. JACKSONVILLE
7. VERO BEACH
8. AMELIA ISLAND
9. TALLAHASSEE
10. GAINESVILLE



## HISTORY/CULTURE

1. PENSACOLA
2. SARASOTA
3. JACKSONVILLE
4. AMELIA ISLAND
5. FORT MYERS
6. NAPLES
7. TALLAHASSEE
8. DESTIN
9. GAINESVILLE
10. VERO BEACH



## GIRLS'/GUYS' WILD WEEKEND

1. SARASOTA
2. DESTIN
3. FORT MYERS
4. JACKSONVILLE
5. AMELIA ISLAND
6. NAPLES
7. PENSACOLA
8. GAINESVILLE
9. TALLAHASSEE
10. VERO BEACH



## CORPORATE EVENTS

1. DESTIN
2. SARASOTA
3. JACKSONVILLE
4. PENSACOLA
5. NAPLES
6. GAINESVILLE
7. FORT MYERS
8. AMELIA ISLAND
9. TALLAHASSEE
10. VERO BEACH





## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS: FISHING, GOLFING, BIKING & BOATING

Travelers made several mentions of outdoor activities participated in during their stay in Sarasota. Fishing, golfing, biking, boating and kayaking were the most commonly discussed activities:

“in sarasota florida in 78 degree weather... going kayaking hanging in the pool or by the beach and getting a tan... paradise!”

*source: facebook.com*

“Beautiful morning out at the beach. Tom is fishing right here from the beach. Kids will be here later. Can't wait. Love it here in Sarasota”

*source: facebook.com*



## GIRLS' /GUYS' WILD WEEKEND:

Visitors to Sarasota frequently mentioned traveling to the city for a girls' weekend or bachelorette party. The women often shared their excitement to spend time shopping or lying on the beach with their girlfriends:

“sarasota...girls weekend=overeating candy, laying in the sun, and shopping til we drop...yes pleeeeeease!”

*source: facebook.com*

“Vacation bachelorette party wedding vacation sun pool great food shopping #Sarasota Florida”

*source: twitter.com*

## LUXURY/ROMANCE/RELAXATION: RESORTS

The Ritz-Carlton and the Longboat Key Club and Resort were the most commonly mentioned places to stay in Sarasota. While both resorts were seen as luxurious, Longboat Key Club and Resort was also discussed as a relaxing and romantic vacation spot, with many visitors attending weddings at the resort:

“I attended a wedding at the Longboat Key Resort and the reception was at the Harbourside Dining Room. It was amazing!!”

*source: forum.theknot.com*

“The only hotel in Florida that has topped this resort is the Ritz Carlton in Sarasota, both hotels are top drawer.”

*source: boards.cruisecritic.com*

## SPORTS: MLB SPRING TRAINING

Lastly, travelers mentioned traveling to Sarasota specifically to see Spring Training for Major League Baseball's Baltimore Orioles. Visitors discussed that they had already made travel arrangements and purchased spring training game tickets. In addition, many visitors also noted that they were impressed with Ed Smith Stadium, describing it as “beautiful”:

“TWO Days till SARASOTA!!!! Spring Training with the O's.... HELL YEAH :)”

*source: facebook.com*

“Just returned from Sarasota. great experience being at the Orioles spring training... really gives you hope for their future ...what a great facility, Ed Smith Stadium is beautiful.”

*source: twitter.com*



## FAMILY FUN: FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Many visitors to Jacksonville shared experiences where they visited family members who lived in the city. Others mentioned taking a short family vacation to Jacksonville followed by a trip to Disney World or Orlando. Visitors praised the food, zoo, beach and shopping while spending time with family:

“Just getting home from Jacksonville. Had an AMAZINGLY PHENOMENAL and FUN couple of days with the family. Beach, BBQ, Zoo, and shopping. Nice to see everyone soooooo happy. Broke.....both in my body and in the pocket, but worth it!”

*source: facebook.com*

“visited family in Jacksonville! super fun and grrreat food!!!! even got to go see the beach!!!!”

*source: facebook.com*



## RELAXATION: BEACH AND SPA

Time spent at Jacksonville Beach and hotel pools were commonly mentioned among travelers boasting about relaxing on their trip. In addition to relaxing at the pool or beach, others asked for spa recommendations for their stay in Jacksonville:

“Anyone know of a good spa that has steam rooms and stuff where you can relax after treatments in jacksonville? #jax #spas”

*source: twitter.com*

“had a nice and relaxing weekend in Jacksonville Beach”

*source: facebook.com*



## ROMANCE: WEDDINGS

Visitors often shared that they had traveled to the Jacksonville area for weddings. Beach weddings were mentioned most often, with several visitors specifically referencing St. Augustine:

“Heading down to St. Augustine Beach. FI for my sons wedding. Beautiful sunset wedding on St. Augustine beach. Wishing Rob and Kelly all the love, happiness and support from Mom.”

*source: facebook.com*

## HISTORY/CULTURE: GHOST TOURS & FORT MANTANZAS

St. Augustine was also discussed as a great destination for travelers interested in history and culture. Travelers especially enjoyed the night ghost tours and touring Fort Mantanzas:

“So, went to St. Augustine for the past two days. It is gorgeous there! All these cute little shops and historic places. I love it! Even went on one of the ghost tours there.”

*source: facebook.com*

## HISTORY/CULTURE: CRAWFISH FESTIVAL

A large portion of Pensacola travelers shared their plans to attend the Crawfish Festival in Pensacola for “mud bugs and beer.” Crawfish Festival attendees also mentioned their plans to go to other festivals that same weekend, such as the Steel Drum Festival and the Mullet Toss at FloraBama:

“There are lots of activities going on this weekend....Mullet toss at FloraBama, Crawfish festival down town and the Most important of all the 2nd Annual Musicians’ memorial (Part 1) at Paradise Bar/Grill Pensacola Beach...Something to do for Friday, Saturday and Sunday... Woohooooo.”

source: [twitter.com](#)

## HISTORY/CULTURE: PENSACOLA BEACH AIR SHOW

Many travelers mentioned going to watch the Blue Angels perform at the Pensacola Beach Air Show. Some even stated their intent to visit Pensacola in the future solely based on this show:

“Why am I up this early? Off to Pensacola again to watch the Blue Angels beach show. :)”

source: [twitter.com](#)

## HISTORY/CULTURE: NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM DAY TRIPS

Relatedly, many past visitors recommended the Naval Aviation Museum for a day trip, especially because entrance was free and visitors were able to watch the Blue Angels practice:

“I HIGHLY reccomend taken a day trip to pensacola and seeing the Naval aviation museum.. free of charge, and as a bonus, you get to see the Blue angels practice!!”

source: [disboards.com](#)

## BEACH: CLEAR WATER & WHITE SAND

Past visitors also frequently recommended Pensacola to other travelers because of its clear water and “pure white” sandy beaches:

“Kinda hit your post/question by accident, but wanted to let you know that my wife and I are serious travellers and have been to beaches around the world. the absolute finest beach you’ll ever lie on is Navarre and/ or Pensacola Beach. pure white sand, no rock or grit, not too crowded, decent waves (some surfing)...”

source: [tripadvisor.com](#)

## ROMANCE: WEDDINGS & HONEYMOONS

Travelers also described their excitement about weddings and honeymoons in Pensacola, describing it as a beautiful place for such events:

“Excited about our wedding on Pensacola beach tomorrow. The weather is beautiful.”

source: [facebook.com](#)

“Honeymooning @ Pensacola Beach, Florida. It is absolutely beautiful down here. ...!!!”

source: [facebook.com](#)



## LUXURY: RESORTS

The Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa was recommended to others as the nicest or best resort in Destin:

“I think the Hilton Sandestin is the best hotel resort on the FL gulf coast near Destin...”

*source: [tripadvisor.com](http://tripadvisor.com)*

“The Hilton at San Destin is the nicest resort hotel in the area. There’s plenty to occupy a family with children.”

*source: [tripadvisor.com](http://tripadvisor.com)*



## CORPORATE EVENTS: “SOCIAL MEDIA POWER BUSINESS TRIP” EVENT

Business trips to Destin were commonly discussed among visitors, specifically noting that they were there for the “Social Media Powered Business Trip” event. Additionally, Publix and Mary Kay were the companies most frequently associated with business trips to Destin:

“Hi everyone I am back from Destin, Fl. Went on a business trip for Mary Kay and am soooo excited to get going.”

*Source: [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)*

“Now that we have arrived in Destin the “business” part of the Social Media Powered Business Trip has begun.”

*source: [twitter.com](https://twitter.com)*



## SHOPPING: DESTIN COMMONS

Many visitors to Destin expressed their interest and excitement in going shopping during their trip. Destin Commons was the most frequently mentioned place to stop within conversation:

“Out to dinner then, Destin Commons for more shopping! After that enjoying the nite life here in FL babyyy”

*Source: [twitter.com](https://twitter.com)*

## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS: FISHING

Visitors shared that they had engaged in numerous outdoor activities while visiting Destin, such as diving, parasailing and kayaking; however, fishing (e.g., deep sea, spear, kayak) was mentioned most often. Visitors discussed their previous fishing trips or expressed excitement about their plans:

“Alex, We just got back from another fine trip to Destin. We were fishing and freediving. We speared three cobia up to 48lbs and caught one on a jig and also speared two nice groupers up to 20lbs...”

*source: [spearboard.com](http://spearboard.com)*

## RELAXATION/FAMILY FUN: BEACH

The beach was mentioned frequently among people visiting Destin for various reasons, such as family vacations, relaxation and spring break trips. Visitors described the beach as “beautiful,” often referring to the white sand and the ocean:

“We were last in Destin when my 9 yr old daughter was 3. She stepped on the beach, and even though the sand was hot, she pointed at it and asked, “snow?” It is so beautiful and so white...”

*source: [tugbbs.com/forums.com](http://tugbbs.com/forums.com)*



## SPORTING EVENTS: MLB SPRING TRAINING

As seen in the Sarasota conversation, Major League Baseball spring training was also a popular reason for travelers to visit Fort Myers. The Boston Red Sox and the Minnesota Twins both attracted visitors to the area in February and March. Travelers discussed having booked their trip or having purchased their game tickets in order to see their favorite team in action prior to the start of the regular season:

“I can’t wait to get out of the frozen Tundra. We’re leaving for Fort Myers on Saturday. We’re taking in a spring training game on Monday. Yaah Twins”

*source: facebook.com*

“In fort myers, Florida. Home of the Red Sox and the Twins spring training! Can’t wait to watch my sox play the phils tomorrow! Me and Hilary are already having a blast!.”

*source: facebook.com*

## SHOPPING: OUTLETS AND THRIFT STORES

Many travelers expressed excitement over the range of shopping options available in Fort Myers. The Tanger Outlets were mentioned most frequently, although conversation also included vintage and thrift store excursions:

“Made it to fort myers! Now heading to the outlets for shopping and lunch:)”

*source: twitter.com*

“In fort myers shopping at the thrift stores and goodwills with the bestie my mom!”

*source: facebook.com*

## GIRLS’/GUYS’ WEEKEND: SPRING BREAK

Many travelers noted that they would be traveling to Fort Myers for a Spring Break vacation. Most notably, those on Spring Break were excited about the possibility of spending time on the beach:

“Fort myers beach ranked #6 on top places to go for spring break this year!!! Alright alright!!!”

*source: facebook.com*

“Spring Break on Fort Myers beach starts today....time to go to the beach and see all the excitement.”

*source: twitter.com*

## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS: FISHING, SAILING, SWIMMING, BEACH

Travelers to Fort Myers mentioned partaking in different outdoor activities such as fishing, sailing, swimming or simply spending time on the beach. Many shared that they had been fishing right on the beach or off of the pier daily, in addition to spending part of their day sailing on the ocean. Visitors also discussed their excitement at observing manatees by the pier or while kayaking:

“went to fort myers beach this mourning and went out sailing all afternoon life is good”

*source: facebook.com*

“Fort Myers Beach...Manatees are so beautiful to watch, gentle giants! THERE WERE 14 MANATEES SWIMMING UNDER THE PIER.”

*source: twitter.com*

## RELAXATION/OUTDOORS/FAMILY FUN: BEACH

A vast majority of travelers discussed their beach experiences in Naples. Many of them described it as relaxing and as a good way to spend time with family. The beach was frequently described as beautiful, with many people mentioning the warm ocean and the white “sugar” sand:

Furthermore, many visitors discussed the sunsets they had witnessed while on the beaches of Naples. Some shared videos and pictures, while others simply described the sunsets, calling them “gorgeous” or “divine”:

“I was there a few years ago. I stayed further north in a resort on Vanderbilt beach. It was a great place for a lazy beach vacation and the water was very warm and the beach was very white sand...”

*source: [forum.skyscraperpage.com](http://forum.skyscraperpage.com)*

“Sunset on the beach. Gorgeous! I never want to leave Naples.”

*source: [twitter.com](https://twitter.com)*

## HISTORY/CULTURE: WINTER WINE FESTIVAL

The Winter Wine Festival was mentioned regularly among visitors to Naples. The majority of the conversation was in the form of people sharing articles about the proceeds raised for children in need, as well as discussion of the celebrity chefs attending:

“Some very cool chefs are coming to the Naples Winter Wine Festival this year, including some of my @BravoTopChef faves! <http://t.co/YxlEn0C>”

*source: [twitter.com](https://twitter.com)*

“Wow...what a great event. People from all over the world came here to Naples to help raise money for kids charities here in Collier County. This is the largest charity wine auction in the country!”

*source: [facebook.com](https://facebook.com)*

## LUXURY: RESORTS

The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort was mentioned frequently among visitors traveling to Naples. They often praised the Ritz-Carlton or sought advice regarding a few luxury hotels that they were considering (such as the Marriot Beach Resort and LaPlaya Beach Resort):

“Just back from a fabulous trip to Naples, Florida. ... Lucked out with a great rate at the world famous Ritz Carlton beach resort. Perfect vacation.”

*source: [facebook.com](https://facebook.com)*

## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS: EVERGLADES

Visitors discussed visiting the Everglades and participating in various tours on airboats, canoes and kayaks. They also mentioned fishing and viewing the wildlife:

“Coming to Naples area and looking for things to do with 3 teen girls. On the everglades tours will we (hopefully) see dolphins and manatees in early March or will it be mostly birds? Interesting enough ? great sunsets are nice idea - but... thank you for any info!”

*source: [tripadvisor.com](https://tripadvisor.com)*

## RELAXATION: PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE

A large portion of Amelia Island travelers recommended the destination because of its relaxing and quiet atmosphere. These travelers further recommended the Ritz-Carlton on the island due to its spa, kids club and other amenities:

“LOVE Amelia Island (but it’s northern FL). About 30 mins. from Jacksonville airport (JetBlue flies direct from JFK). Low-key, family-friendly, beautiful. Big hotels are the Ritz (which has a spa, kids club, etc. - we’ve stayed there and were happy) or The Plantation.”

*source: urbanbaby.com*

## HISTORY/CULTURE: SHRIMP FESTIVAL

Several travelers mentioned traveling to Amelia Island for the Shrimp Festival on Fernandina Beach. Those who attended said they enjoyed the food, particularly the shrimp:

“Just got home after going to a great art and shrimp festival on Amelia Island!! It was huge. Ate some great shrimp, too!”

*source: facebook.com*

## BEACH: SUNSET AND SUNRISE WALKS

Many visitors shared that they enjoyed walking on the beach at Amelia Island, particularly during sunset and sunrise:

“had a nice morning here in Amelia Island - walked on the beach and had a facial at the spa”

*source: twitter.com*

## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS: CUMBERLAND ISLAND WILD HORSES

Travelers shared their past experiences or future plans to visit Cumberland Island to see the wild horses:

“Touring the Cumberland Sound off of Amelia Island watching wild horses roam the beach and dolphins come into the sound... you just can’t believe it! View of a lifetime!!”

*source: facebook.com*

## HISTORY/CULTURE: CIVIL WAR FORT

Fort Clinch was recommended by visitors for those interested in discovering Civil War history:

“I would stop in Savannah and enjoy historic district, riverfront, etc. then you could stop along the way in St. Simons and Jekyll Island which have a lot of history then make your way down to Amelia Island, FL which is just across the border and enjoy Ft. Clinch SP/Civil War fort, historic downtown and a nice beach then make your way down either A1A or I 95 to St. Augustine and points south. Along this route is also Cumberland Island national seashore...”

*source: tripadvisor.com*



## HISTORY/CULTURE: CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Gainesville's annual Christmas Festival was frequently mentioned in social conversation, with visitors often noting that they had either purchased tickets or were attending the Christmas festival:

"If you haven't been to see Gainesville Christmas Festival at Westside Baptist , you need to. It is amazing!!!!"

*source: facebook.com*

"I just got tickets for 'Gainesville Christmas Festival (Fri, Dec 9 2011 6:00PM).' Check it out!"

*source: twitter.com*

## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS: CAMPING TRIP

Visitors discussed going to Gainesville for camping trips. Although no specific park or campsite was mentioned for these trips, travelers generally noted that they would be camping with friends and family:

"Leaving later tonight to head to Gainesville for a family camping trip, def looking forward to it..."

*source: facebook.com*

"Heading to Gainesville for our camping trip today, i'm out till Thursday !"

*source: facebook.com*

## SPORTS: UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Conversation around sporting events in Gainesville focused on University of Florida athletic teams, specifically the football team and men's basketball team. Visitors often mentioned that they were making a trip to Gainesville specifically to see the football team play in "The Swamp":

"Walkin out the door to head to gainesville with dad for our yearly trip to the swamp for the gators opener. College football is officially here;)"

*source: facebook.com*

"I'm going up to Gainesville for a late basketball game, (yes UK,) any hotel you UFers would recommend?"

*source: facebook.com*

## WILD WEEKEND:

### BACHELOR/BACHELORETTE PARTY

Visitors also often shared that they traveled to Gainesville for a bachelor/bachelorette party with friends:

"Bachelor party for my friend jeremy. Kickin' back and campin in a backyard!! In gainesville. Florida"

*source: twitter.com*

## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS:

### SAN FELASCO PRESERVE STATE PARK

When discussing outdoor activities, Gainesville visitors most frequently mentioned San Felasco Preserve State Park. Beyond stating they were at the park, visitors recommended the park as a great place for mountain biking:

"I did a five mile trail run this weekend with my wonderful niece at San Felasco State Park near Gainesville, Florida. It was a good time."

*source: twitter.com*



## RELAXATION: WALT DISNEY RESORT

The majority of Vero Beach conversation consisted of visitors discussing the Walt Disney Resort in Vero Beach, often comparing this resort with Orlando's Disney resort. Most travelers recommended the resort to those who did not want to go to the theme parks and opted for a more relaxing beach vacation. Past visitors also recommended that resort-goers rent a car to venture off the resort and explore Vero:

"We love Vero Beach! It is definitely NOT a Disney World vacation. It is a fantastic beach resort. It is a different kind of vacation. We find it to be a relaxing, lovely resort. However, if you are going to miss the WDW vacation experience then you may want to reconsider..."

source: [disboards.com](http://disboards.com)

## HISTORY/CULTURE: HIBISCUS FESTIVAL

Many travelers shared their enjoyment of the Hibiscus Festival, specifically complimenting its price and music:

"Went to the Hibiscus Festival in Vero last nite. Best music ever, 3 1/2 hours straight...all for \$2.00! couldn't get this anywhere else for \$100! Love Vero Beach!"

source: [facebook.com](http://facebook.com)

"Me and Justin going to 'hibiscus festival' next sat in vero beach!"

source: [facebook.com](http://facebook.com)

## LUXURY: VERO BEACH HOTEL & COSTA D'ESTE SPECIAL OCCASION VISITS

Travelers shared their experiences from recent visits at two luxury hotels in Vero, the Vero Beach Hotel & Spa and the Costa d'Este. Others noted that they planned to stay at one of these hotels. Most visitors mentioned that they were staying at these hotels for a special event. Weddings, anniversaries and birthdays were frequently mentioned within the Vero Beach Hotel discussion, and New Year's Eve stays were prevalent in the Costa d'Este conversation:

"Kimpton Vero Beach Hotel & Spa - I am 90% sure we will be staying here for our 13th anniversary. Can't wait!!"

source: [twitter.com](http://twitter.com)

## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS: GUYS FISHING TRIPS

Many male travelers were reaching out to other sportsmen seeking recommendations for boat ramps in the Sebastian Inlet area. Others stated that they went to Sebastian Inlet for weekend fishing trips with "the boys":

"Got back from a great weekend with Rick and the boys at Sebastian Inlet S.P. A little fishing and a great day at the beach."

source: [facebook.com](http://facebook.com)

"I am planning a little wahoo fishing trip in a few weeks and will be towing a 25' Parker over from the west central region. Thinking of heading out of Sebastian Inlet. I am looking for info on the closest boat ramp/marina for getting out early and easy as I am not familiar with the area..."

source: [forums.floridasportsman.com](http://forums.floridasportsman.com)

## HISTORY/CULTURE: TALLAHASSEE FILM FESTIVAL

Visitors to Tallahassee frequently discussed the Tallahassee Film Festival. This conversation consisted of people congratulating others for their awards or sharing that their own films were part of the festival. Others stated that they were in Tallahassee for the festival and were looking forward to it:

“Thrilled to be part of the Tallahassee Film Festival this Friday at 7:00 p.m. at the FSU Student Life Cinema...”

*source: twitter.com*

“Looking forward to Tallahassee Film Festival starts tonight. See You In the DARK!”

*source: twitter.com*

## ADVENTURE/OUTDOORS: STATE PARKS

The most commonly mentioned state park among people traveling to Tallahassee was Wakulla Springs State Park. These visitors discussed viewing wildlife (such as manatees, alligators and birds), swimming and boating:

“Manatee, alligators, beautiful natural spring water (very cold, too). We had a great afternoon at Wakulla Springs! Oh, and I got to see a turtle lay her eggs and bury them - very cool!!”

*source: facebook.com*

“We are at Wakulla Springs state park near Tallahassee. Went on a boat ride this morning, now lunch, then swimming at the springs...”

*source: facebook.com*

## SPORTS: FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

People often shared that they were visiting Tallahassee for a Florida State University sporting event. Football games were mentioned most often, followed by basketball. Visitors also discussed various hotel options:

“Going on a little road trip to Tallahassee on Friday for the UM-FSU game. Should be an awesome weekend #GoCanes”

*source: twitter.com*

“Trying to find a hotel in Tallahassee for the OUvsFSU game weekend is impossible :( ALL the hotels are already booked! Whhhhyyyy”

*source: facebook.com*

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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**CONVERSATION VOLUME** — Representation of the volume of conversation that appears in the form of posts, comments or messages on forum, micro-blogs, message boards, groups and online video.

**FORT MYERS METRO** — Consists of Fort Myers and Cape Coral.

**FORUMS** — Online message boards where users post within the forum and add to threads, which are typically used for a discussion site.

**JACKSONVILLE METRO** — Encompasses St. Augustine, Fernandina Beach, Jacksonville Beach, Orange Park, Middleburg, Green Cove Springs and Macclenny.

**MICROBLOGS** — Form of a blog that contains much smaller entries in short sentence format, images or embedded videos. Twitter is considered a microblog.

**SENTIMENT INDEX SCORE** — Calculated based on  $(\text{positive comments} - \text{negative comments} / \text{positive comments} + \text{negative comments}) * 5$ .

**VERO BEACH METRO** — Represented by Vero Beach and Sebastian.

**VIDEOS** — Video footage syndicated online. YouTube is an example of a video site.



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**Jeff Adelson-Yan** and **Steve Parker, Jr.** are co-founders of Levelwing, a digital marketing firm offering research, media, social and analytics services to help businesses operate with greater clarity and profitability. Please contact us to learn more about our custom research offerings.



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