

The  
Florida Keys  
& Key West  
... come as you are<sup>®</sup>



The Florida Keys & Key West  
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The mission of the Monroe County Tourist Development Council is to set an overall direction for the Monroe County tourism marketing effort in a manner that will assure long-term sustained growth in tourism revenues while also guaranteeing the sustainability and improvement of our product, including both our man-made and natural resources, and improvements to the quality of life of our resident.

# WELCOME!



Our lush tropical island has fascinating architecture, friendly people, a rich history, and plenty of activities to keep you engaged or help you relax. Filled with a funky charm, Key West is a sophisticated place with amazing restaurants, diverse entertainment, eclectic art, professional theatre, and live music that includes salsa, show tunes, disco, country and classical. Our gay and lesbian guest houses are legendary, and our mainstream hotels and inns are always All Welcome. Drag shows, weddings, water excursions, late night parties, beaches, clothing optional

resorts, and the only gay & lesbian historic trolley tour make our island the preeminent LGBTQ vacation choice. But the best part about our town is our open and accepting attitude. "One Human Family" is our city motto, and our closets are only used for our costumes!

Whether you are looking for a romantic retreat or decadent fun, you can find it here in Gay Key West where we throw a party 365 days a year!

[www.fla-keys.co.uk](http://www.fla-keys.co.uk)



## LOWER KEYS

Where the Florida Keys island chain takes a graceful westerly turn toward the sunset, the Lower Keys are home to two national wildlife refuges, a national marine sanctuary and a state park, and are surrounded by a marine environment filled with abundant terrestrial and marine wildlife. Ride a bicycle through Key Deer country, take a fishing adventure in the backcountry, or fish the deep blue waters beyond the reef.

Near MM 37 is Bahia Honda State Park and Recreation Area, whose white sandy beaches and abundant wildlife frequently earn the area “one of the most beautiful beaches in America” accolade.

## MARATHON

Visitors enjoy Marathon's fishing heritage and seafaring traditions, such as the Marathon Seafood Festival. Enjoy plenty of waterside restaurants that harvest fresh fish, lobster and stone crab claws from local waters.

Marathon offers spectacular sailing, fishing, world-class wreck and reef diving and snorkelling, in addition to the island's impeccably maintained beaches, eco-attractions and marine-based educational programmes including The Turtle Hospital, which was the world's first licensed veterinary hospital dedicated to the treatment of sea turtles, and the Dolphin Research Center, a not-for-profit education and research facility since 1984.



Key West    Big Pine Key & The Lower Keys



## ISLAMORADA

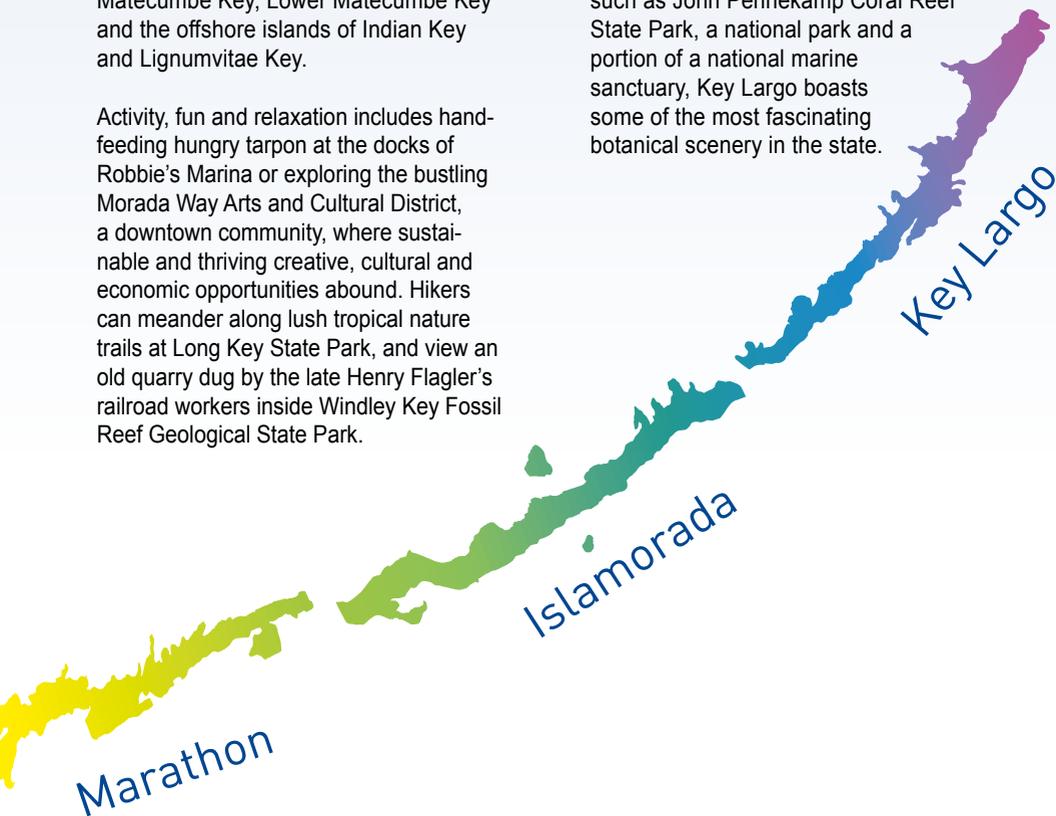
Situated between the saltwater wilderness of Everglades National Park and the deep blue waters of the Florida Strait is Islamorada, made up of six islands: Plantation Key, Windley Key, Upper Matecumbe Key, Lower Matecumbe Key and the offshore islands of Indian Key and Lignumvitae Key.

Activity, fun and relaxation includes hand-feeding hungry tarpon at the docks of Robbie's Marina or exploring the bustling Morada Way Arts and Cultural District, a downtown community, where sustainable and thriving creative, cultural and economic opportunities abound. Hikers can meander along lush tropical nature trails at Long Key State Park, and view an old quarry dug by the late Henry Flagler's railroad workers inside Windley Key Fossil Reef Geological State Park.



## KEY LARGO

Key Largo, the first and northernmost of the Florida Keys, is just an hour's drive from South Florida's two main airports, yet it's a world away. Home to tropical hardwoods, winding creeks, two state parks such as John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, a national park and a portion of a national marine sanctuary, Key Largo boasts some of the most fascinating botanical scenery in the state.



# COME AS YOU ARE

*KeyWest is internationally known as a gay mecca, attracting more than 250,000 visitors to this top LGBTQ vacation spot that celebrates openness and pride — the entire destination is renowned for its welcoming and accepting attitude.*



The two-mile by four-mile island hosts some of the best events each year including June's Key West Pride and September's Womenfest. Hungry for a warm-weather vacation spot with great restaurants and a welcoming vibe? Satisfy your appetite in sunny, subtropical Key West.

## ENJOY AN ALL-WELCOME ACCOMMODATION

Key West features several properties that specifically cater to gay men — complete with pools, Jacuzzis, clothing-optional sun-decks, full-service bars and complimentary happy hours. Other accommodations are known for their warm welcome to all

guests and include a wide array of hotels, motels, inns and waterfront resorts.

## DINE AT A GAY-OWNED AND OPERATED RESTAURANT

From upscale gourmet restaurants to casual seafood spots, Key West and the Keys are known for culinary excellence. Among Key West's landmark restaurants are Azur, featuring Mediterranean specialties and wonderful brunches on a shaded terrace or in an intimate dining room; and The Flaming Buoy Filet Co., a blend of retro supper club and sassy corner bistro. Both are gay-owned and -operated, providing top-rated cuisine and warm personal service.

# openness & pride





A woman with tattoos on her arm and a colorful top is standing in front of a building with a balcony. The tattoos include a large spiral design and an anchor. The building has a white balcony and a red and white striped awning. A bicycle is parked in the background.

# ONE HUMAN FAMILY

*On the first day of the new millennium, an artist in Key West started printing and handing out free ONE HUMAN FAMILY stickers. The motto was unanimously adopted as the inclusive official philosophy of the city of Key West. With more than three million stickers sent out worldwide, it has become an international grassroots movement to unite all people and guarantee everyone equal rights, dignity and respect.*

After Key West city commissioners adopted the motto, Monroe County commissioners also embraced it for the entire 125-mile-long Florida Keys island chain in early 2001.

## DISCOVER SOME LGBTQ HISTORY

The Tennessee Williams Museum, located at 513 Truman Ave., memorializes the iconic playwright who called Key West home from the late 1940s until his death in 1983. Williams lived in Key West as an openly gay man with his partner Frank Merlo and had a pivotal influence on the island's literary culture. The museum features one of the largest permanent collections of Williams memorabilia currently on display for the public.

## GET OUT AND PLAY

Key West offers fantastic nightlife with many LGBTQ bars, shops and entertainment venues — including several located around the 700 block of Duval Street near the island city's permanent rainbow crosswalks. Premier LGBTQ events are held each year that attract visitors from around the world: Key West Pride, Tropical Heat, Womenfest and the Head-dress Ball as part of infamous Fantasy Fest among others.

# OPEN SPACES

*Key West is home to several public beaches including the locals' favourite at Fort Zachary Taylor Historic State Park (affectionately nicknamed Fort Liz Taylor Beach by the LGBTQ community).*

Taylor stayed in Key West frequently during her years with Richard Burton — whose adoptive father, playwright Philip Burton, numbered among the island's famous residents. The beach is a perfect place to swim and snorkel in crystal-clear waters, and the park provides numerous amenities.

## EXPERIENCE AN LGBTQ WATER-SPORTS ADVENTURE

Blu Q Gay Sailing Adventures offers a fantastic portfolio of scheduled watersports activities. Passengers can enjoy several different clothing-optional excursions including the all-male Sail, Snorkel & Paddle trips — as well as all-welcome sunset sails. Some trips include visits to remote islands and sandbars, sailing across the clear shallow waters of the backcountry and

viewing stunning scenery of mangroves and marine life. Dolphins, stingrays, and turtles occasionally appear to give passengers a true aquatic welcome.

## FIND THAT PICTURE-PERFECT PLACE TO WATCH THE SUNSET

Venture out and enjoy one of Key West's world-famous sunsets. While many spots offer breathtaking sunset views, virtually everyone MUST experience the Mallory Square Sunset Celebration. The iconic waterfront gathering takes place each evening beside Key West Harbour, where crowds enjoy the talents of energetic street performers, view artisans' handmade wares and applaud the sun setting over the water.



sail, snorkel  
& paddle

# CONNECT & PROTECT

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*When you live on an island, you become aware that everyone has an extra responsibility to look out for each other, and the environment we share, because it doesn't take much to upset the natural balance of life. Whether you live in The Florida Keys, or just reside in a Keys state-of-mind, there's nothing more important than conserving and preserving the precious resources of the world around us.*



respect nature



There are a million reasons to love The Florida Keys, but without the spectacular coral reefs that surround this magical place, they wouldn't exist at all. These days, the reefs are under duress from changing environmental conditions.

Key Largo's Coral Restoration Foundation™, the Summerland Key-based Elizabeth Moore International Center for Coral Reef Research and the Restoration field station for MOTE Marine Laboratory are each engaged in an ongoing mission to preserve the coral reefs of the Florida Keys.

People visit the Keys out of respect for the natural ecosystems and tropical beauty,

however extensive contact can threaten the land and marine habitats such as coral reefs. Walking tours, trails and hikes maximize the islands' natural surroundings, with minimal impact on the environment.

Many accommodations throughout the Keys are committed to conserving natural resources: water, energy, as well as significantly reducing the amount of waste produced. Volunteer to help clean up and preserve the local environment. Finding local projects is as simple as reading the newspapers, checking media sites and asking around.

# TRAVELLING TIPS

*The 125-mile-long Florida Keys island chain is linked to mainland Florida by U.S. Highway 1, the Overseas Highway.*

Visitors can fly into Miami International Airport (MIA) or Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL) and from there can reach the Keys by airport shuttle bus or rental car. Travellers can reach Key Largo, the gateway to the Keys, in about an hour from Miami or an hour and 45 minutes from Fort Lauderdale. Key West can be reached in about 4 hours from Miami and 4 hours and 45 minutes from Fort Lauderdale.

## AIR SERVICE TO THE FLORIDA KEYS

For an up-to-date roster of commercial airlines serving Key West International (EYW), go to [fla-keys.com/how-to-get-here](http://fla-keys.com/how-to-get-here).



## DRIVING DATA TO KEYS/KEY LARGO

| From       | Miles | KM  | Hours |
|------------|-------|-----|-------|
| Miami      | 50    | 80  | 1     |
| Fort Myers | 200   | 320 | 4     |
| Tampa      | 300   | 480 | 6     |
| Orlando    | 280   | 450 | 5.25  |

## DISTANCE FROM MIAMI

| Region     | Miles | KM  |
|------------|-------|-----|
| Key Largo  | 50    | 80  |
| Islamorada | 76    | 122 |
| Marathon   | 111   | 178 |
| Lower Keys | 128   | 205 |
| Key West   | 159   | 254 |

## VIA RENTAL CAR

Rental cars are available on location in Key West and there are no one-way rental car charges within Florida. Visitors can fly into Key West and enjoy the city for a few days before picking up a rental car and driving back to mainland Florida after enjoying some more days in the Upper Keys with





activities such as snorkelling, SUP, kayaking, visiting the Turtle Hospital, boating and dining.

### VIA BOAT

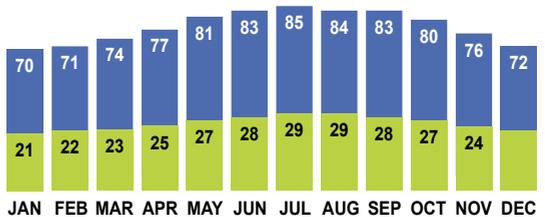
Ferry connections from Fort Myers or Marco Island to Key West are offered via the Key West Express. Voyages take approximately 3.5 hours.

Extensive details on getting to the Florida Keys & Key West are available at: [fla-keys.com/how-to-get-here](http://fla-keys.com/how-to-get-here)

### WEATHER/CLIMATE

Wherever you are right now, chances are the weather is better in the Florida Keys. That's true even on a summer day. The hottest it's ever been in Key West is 97° F (36° C), and that was in 1880. At the peak of summer, the average high air temperature is about 89° F (32° C). The Keys are devoid of superhighways or urban sprawl to absorb and radiate the sun's heat. And the subtropical islands are cooled by sea breezes. In the winter, the Keys are typically the warmest region in the continental U.S. There has never been a frost in Key West, according to the U.S. Weather Service.

Below are the average monthly air temperatures for the past 30 years, according to the Key West weather office. Temperatures shaded in blue are Fahrenheit and those in green are Celsius.



### MORE INFORMATION

-  @floridakeysandkeywest
-  @thefloridakeys
-  @FloridaKeysTV
-  @thefloridakeys

[www.fla-keys.co.uk](http://www.fla-keys.co.uk)

# A TYPICAL DAY IN KEY WEST. CLOSE TO PERFECT. FAR FROM NORMAL.



- Start your day with pool-side breakfast, then cuddle up in a lounge chair for a little nap. Greet the late risers with a grin, throw on your flip-flops, stroll or bike to lunch in town.
- Leisurely make your way back to the guest house, checking out who's in town and the action on your favourite apps. Chat up the new guests at the pool over afternoon cocktails, drop your clothes and go for a swim.
- Get dressed and head out for dinner – savour local seafood under the stars. Hit the bars on Duval Street and head back to the guest house for a nightcap. Get to know those new guests even better in the hot tub. Retire for the evening, slumber till noon...