

Making the Most of a Trip to Tampa Bay, Florida

After over a year in confinement, are you ready to finally break free and enjoy a well-deserved vacation? Who can blame you — quarantines and lock downs are sometimes necessary but rarely fun. If it's still cold in your neck of the woods, a sunny Florida vacation can offer the cure for what ails you. Here are eight tips for making the most of a trip to Tampa Bay, where you'll find a world of excitement to explore.

1. Hit the Beach

If obeying stay-at-home orders left you looking paler than Casper the Friendly Ghost, your skin might crave the sun's rays. Soak up all that delicious vitamin D at one of Florida's [most well-known beaches](#) on your trip to Tampa Bay.

However, you don't have to spend all your time lazing around on the sand. If you head to Fort De Soto Beach, you can hike the nearby trails [while visiting historic campsites](#) and the fort itself. You can also go snorkeling or book a scuba excursion, or, if you prefer adrenaline, tackle windsurfing.

2. Amuse Yourself

Florida is home to more amusement parks than the one inhabited by the world's most famous mouse, although you can certainly visit Disney World during your stay. However, you'll find no shortage of thrill rides to satisfy every age and adrenaline-craving level without traveling from Tampa to Orlando.

If you always wanted to know what it's like to [live through the zombie apocalypse](#), head to Dead Are Rising. Like tall coasters? Get tickets to Sheikra and Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. If you have little tykes in tow, Treasure Island Fun Center has just-their-size amusements.

3. Shop 'Til You Drop

You'll find no shortage of shopping in Tampa. Head down to International Plaza and Bay Street, where you'll find over 200 shops, 50% of which are unique to the area. You can find wares you won't see on any store shelves back home.

Alternatively, take a trip to Ybor City or Hyde Park Village. The former features a tour of the city's cigar industry and the chance to score some exclusive Cuban cuisine. Wear plenty of sunscreen when perusing the outdoor shops at Hyde Park Village and carry plenty of cash for the street entertainers making the area such a delight.

4. Pamper Yourself

The past year had everyone focused on their health. Why not rejuvenate your body and spirit by booking a spa getaway during your trip?

Are you a newlywed? Relax in [a spa tub for two](#), followed by a relaxing couples massage at the Wyndham Grand Hotel's Pallavi Spa on Clearwater Beach. If you can't get enough vino, especially on your getaway, go to Spa Evangeline for a Cabernet-grape body scrub or sip champagne as you unwind in the jacuzzi.

5. Explore Life Aquatic

If you enjoy underwater life, you'll find no shortage of water parks and zoos to make your stay memorable. Learn about everything from giant sea turtles to manatees by booking tickets to the Florida Aquarium or Clearwater Marine Aquarium. You can even justify your visit as a field trip included in your child's home school curriculum.

What if you always wanted to reel in your dinner, not learn about biology? Book a deep-sea fishing excursion and come home with one whopper of a fish story to share.

6. Tantalize Your Taste Buds

One of the most delicious aspects of any holiday is exploring new regional cuisine. Tampa is famous for a lively culinary scene, with flavors of Cuba and Mexico adding spice.

You can find some of the most authentic tacos off food trucks — please don't overlook these rolling gourmet wonders. However, you can book reservations at Flor Fina or Oak and Ola if you want a soup-to-nuts fine-dining experience.

7. Cultivate Cultural Appreciation

Tampa Bay is home to multiple museums where you can expand your cultural appreciation. If you plan to celebrate Women's History Month during your stay, head to the Tampa Museum of Art for [their female photographer's exhibit](#).

If you prefer to remain outdoors, soaking up all that delicious Florida sunshine, head to the Riverwalk to wander palm-tree lined pathways while investigating various galleries. Watch the nightlife in the city come alive as the sun sets.

However, if art isn't your scene, why not explore the Museum of Science and Industry? Explore the Mission: Moonbase exhibit and explore what it might be like to live on earth's only natural

satellite if colonization becomes a reality.

8. Sleep in Luxury's Lap

Eventually, you do need to come inside and rest from your adventures while visiting Tampa Bay. When you do, why not stay in one of [the region's most luxurious resorts](#)? The Epicurean features an onsite spa and gourmet restaurant and an elegant rooftop area with views of downtown. If you plan a longer visit, stay at the Sailport, where rooms come complete with one-and-two-bedroom suites complete with full kitchens and workstations.

Make the Most of Your Trip to Tampa Bay With These Tips

After a year filled with quarantines and shutdowns, you deserve a relaxing vacation. Make the most of your trip to Tampa Bay with these tips.

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