



Chris' Florida Favourites:

Chris' personal picks from places in the world that he has visited.

Top 10 “Fabulous Florida”

Orlando: *The fun centre of the universe! I have visited Orlando more than anywhere else in the U.S. and always find myself caught up in the infectious spirit that seems to pervade the place – from the theme parks to the often-overlooked Downtown Orlando. Gastronomy has also been taken to a new level here recently too.*

Miami: *It's all here: the glitz and the glamour, the sleaze and the slums...but oh, what a package! Everyone should experience some time in Miami – it's everything you've seen on television and so much more. Life is intense one moment and laid-back the next. The Latin flavor is icing on the cake.*

St. Petersburg: *Beach wonderland! Take your time here to meander along the beaches that line the Gulf of Mexico, many of them consistently rated as the finest in the U.S. The communities that stretch along the shore are as varied as the beaches themselves: in turn laid back and low key, upscale and trendy.*

Daytona Beach: *The very name brings the sound of revving engines to the imagination. But Daytona Beach is so much more than the Daytona 500. The famous beach extends for nearly 40 kilometers of hard-packed sands with Atlantic rollers peeling into the far distance - and the destination has matured into a funky, artsy seaside venue.*

Fort Lauderdale: *Genteel Fort Lauderdale. A place for quiet meditation of the vast Atlantic Ocean, romantic strolls along the Blue Wave beaches, fine wine and food, yacht-filled waterways, and arts programs that will keep you busy every evening. The exotic Everglades are on the doorstep here too.*

Venice: *No gondoliers or canals here – but something way cooler. Somewhere offshore in the Gulf of Mexico is a deposit of fossil sharks teeth. And every wave washing up on the shore leaves behind a glistening bounty of these fossil treasures. Kids from 8 to 80 trawl the sands with 'Florida snow shovels' to retrieve these prizes.*

Sarasota: *Sophisticated, quiet haven on the Gulf Coast with sugary white sands, trendy boutiques and first class restaurants. This was my very first experience of the pleasures of the Sunshine State and it remains close to my heart. Visit close by Myakka River State Park to see natural Florida the way it once was.*

Key West: *The ultimate destination in Florida. This is the end of the line: in this case, a line of sandy cays stretching way south toward the Caribbean...and becoming more and more like Caribbean isles until Key West is reached where everybody is a character and the sense of place and time is blurred. Unreal!*

Clearwater: *Too often overlooked in favour of its beachy cousin, St. Petersburg, Clearwater is the best of all worlds: sandwiched between the big city attractions of Tampa and the relaxed Gulf Coast beaches of St. Petersburg, Clearwater also has a vibe all its own – as well as the world-class Dali Museum.*

Tarpon Springs: *A little fragment of Greece washed up on the bayous of the Gulf Coast, this small town captures much of the essence of Greece. The Greek restaurants are authentic and are an excellent precursor to taking a sponge-diving boat to marvel at this most Greek of professions.*