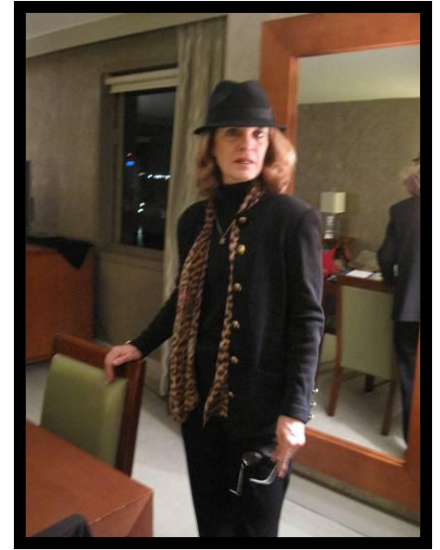


**Tampa's Gasparilla Marathon + Palm Beach and St Augustine  
Trip Notes  
February 23 – March 4, 2010**



See Tom's slide show at:  
[www.photoshow.com/watch/aM5rg3lw](http://www.photoshow.com/watch/aM5rg3lw)

An upside-down winter turned into being an upside-down winter running season for many of us. I'd made the effort to sign up for all the warm southern states and by-pass the winter cold of the northeast. I couldn't have been more upside-down. In mid-January we ran in 2 degrees in Jackson Mississippi, (honest - per the local newspaper), followed by record cold in Waco Texas, then near freezing and high winds in Austin, and before the end of February I found myself in Florida's coldest season of the last 25 years. You'd think Tom would have learned not to travel with me but there he was in Florida shivering along side of me.

On top of my upside-down winter season, much of my travels were during times when the airports were closed and even one trip overlapping what was headlined as the worse travel day on record outside of 9-11. So if you want to take odds on this weekend's B&A Trail Marathon outside of Annapolis being free of snow, don't bet with me. Perhaps I should do a favor for friend David Williams of Houston who is finishing up his 50<sup>th</sup> state at Maryland's B&A Marathon and just stay home?

The purpose of this trip began when Southern Bell friends Charlotte and Tara suggested running the 10<sup>th</sup> and final Gasparilla Marathon, called "The Final Voyage." When they had to switch plans, Palm Beach runners Iva and Brian planned to join me. Alas, not the other Liberty Lady or any of the above were able to make it after all. But not to let that spoil my fun, I continued, and Tom must have thought he could use some fun in the sun – so he booked his ticket, added three days on the front side in Palm Beach at our favorite hotel The Chesterfield, and three days on the backside in Saint Augustine at the best and most historical accommodations available, making it a luxurious nine day adventure. Other than the weather, we were blessed. Ain't life grand?



### **The Marathon – my quick update via iPhone text**

No sales pitch as much because this is the final voyage of the marathon – the tenth and last. This is about my hundredth surely. Well maybe 50 something.

Odd cold and wind to start but ended up gorgeous and next to perfect. With about 2300 marathoners I had plenty of company. Some good and some sad.

I'll work on my top ten excuses for staying in the 5:45 range and I did fall enough to have bloodied the knee down to the shin. That should qualify for a top ten. A la David at PB but he got right up so so did I.

Good swag and lots of food at the end but zilch in between. Prob fine to terminate marathon since bridges couldn't handle the crowds. We slowed to a full stop. Didn't know to expect cobblestones either.



Hadn't known of old Gasparilla tradition of celebration and it's in line with a Mardi Gras. Big festival in Old Historic Ybor district yesterday and today. Its home of x-world's biggest cigar makers. They still hand-roll there but mostly drink and eat. We took a historic trolley to and through.

Saw Amy from Buffalo. We loved that our pictures got in the national advertisements.

For those I didn't send to -- we had a wind chill cold alert this morning on weather channel but winds calmed early and I gave up trash bag by mile 6 or 7.

Here's some of our swag. (Missing the cloth shopping bag and the cinch backpack. This shows a high-tech shirt, hat, both embroidered, heavy medal and large finisher's towel.) They ran out of fancy ribbon and promise to mail it. Ran out of beer and some foods too but still amazing feast at end. They had their own goofy type challenge with huge third medal.



Are these Southerners kind and sweet? Let's just say that I imagine many of them immigrated from the northeast.

I need coffee and a shower and can't decide in what order but some of you know that no report to the first Liberty Lady isn't an option.

### **The weather – well, let's let the alert from**

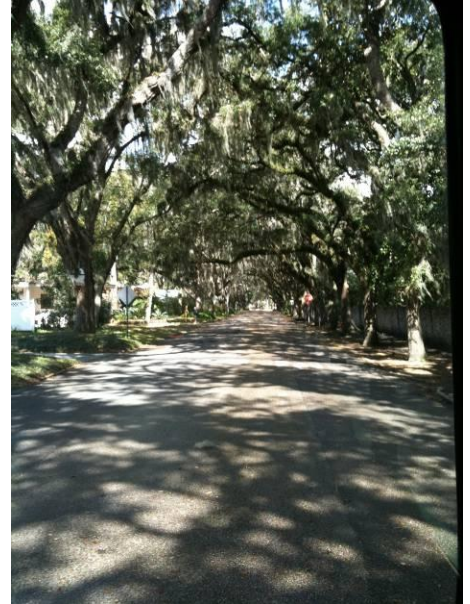
[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) tell the story. (This is from the night before the marathon and we started at 6am.) Local Severe Weather Alert for Tampa, FL - WIND CHILL ADVISORY IN EFFECT FROM 11 PM THIS EVENING TO 8 AM EST SUNDAY... THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN TAMPA BAY AREA - RUSKIN FL HAS ISSUED A WIND CHILL ADVISORY...WHICH IS IN EFFECT FROM 11 PM THIS EVENING TO 8 AM EST SUNDAY. COLDER AIR MOVING INTO THE AREA THIS EVENING ALONG WITH GUSTY NORTHWEST WINDS OVERNIGHT WILL CAUSE WIND CHILL VALUES TO DROP INTO THE MID 20S ACROSS THE NATURE COAST AND LOWER TO MID 30S OVER WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA...EXCEPT FOR THE IMMEDIATE COAST. PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS... A WIND CHILL ADVISORY IS ISSUED WHEN WIND CHILL INDEX VALUES WILL DROP TO 35 OR LOWER...EXCEPT 25 OR LOWER ACROSS THE NATURE COAST AND SUMTER COUNTY.



Thus I didn't wear sunscreen which turned out to be a mistake when I eventually discarded my trash bag around mile 6-7, and my long sleeve around mile 15-16, my warm headband somewhere in there, and left to my tank top my arms burned.

**Top 10 excuses** – all runners like excuses, it's the name of the game, and I too had no trouble coming up with a bundle of them. (Why do we do this to ourselves?)

10. The weather was totally unpredictable and I had no winter gear.
9. Who knew there would be so much cobblestone roadways?
8. We started in the dark at 6am.
7. Who put that road bump there? It was in my way. And after picking myself up, the bloody knee was a very obvious and continual diversion.
6. Who could not stop and look at all the gorgeous waterways? (Surely no marathon has more water-views.)
5. Why did we have to stop on the bridges? There was no stop light – just too many runners to fit.
4. Race directors who have so few porta-potties that lines are created should be shot. I had too many stops.
3. Can there be more rookies with backpacks, holding hands, walking four abreast and all up front?
2. I had to run slow so as to take it all in since this was the last and final voyage of this marathon.
1. And the top excuse? I just like excuses.



But overall, I am thrilled to be consistent -- even if slow. I am thrilled to be able -- even if not as often as I might wish. And I am thrilled to be out there -- even if it's cold in what's supposed to be the warm southern states. Life really is grand!

But it isn't all marathons, thank heavens! That's good, that's enjoyable, but I remind myself there's more to life. Sometimes it's hard to remember . . . Having some super good scenery helps.



**Palm Beach** – would normally deserve a report on its own, but this was where I lived during the week for nearly 7 years, and where I'd just returned from the half marathon in December 2009. I wrote a trip report then, so suffice it to say that we returned to all favorite haunts, ate and drank at each and every one, and had an absolutely glorious time. Despite the rain and wind. Life was grand anyway!

**Shopping delights in Palm Beach** yet the sandals featured in my last Palm Beach trip report (diamonds on the soles of the shoes) must have been sold as they were no longer available.



**Food delights in Palm Beach** where we hunted down our favorites and found a few new ones. Happy hour champagne at the Breakers Hotel, sticky toffee pudding two different times at The Chesterfield (and here's proof to Maricar who gave us hell for missing it last trip) and the famous cheese biscuit from Charlie's Crab House.



**Tampa Downtown** - would not generally be considered a tourist Mecca but it had plenty to do, was perfect for a marathon start, and gave us touring at Historic Ybor City, only a trolley ride away and full of entertainment, shops and museums as well as a street festival. Again, no sales pitch is needed since there's not going to be another marathon. This was the "Final Voyage" of the Gasparilla full marathon which they embroidered on our hats and shirts. Here's the Gasparilla pirate ship which was docked at Expo convention headquarters and later you'll see sailed with cannons blasting and full of pirate costumed party-goers.





**Hotel suite that wrapped around the building** was a big highlight and Westin Tampa gave it to us as an upgrade.



**Gasparilla – Did you know it was like a Mardi Gras?** There is a multi week celebration with parades, pirate costumes, beads and much partying. From our hotel room we saw the famous Gasparilla ship set sail with a long barrage of cannon firings. We saw the costumed pirates earlier with their red hats.



**It was historic Ybor City that was a highlight** and which called Tom back the second time while I was marathon recovering. Just a (historic) short trolley car ride away it is home to their entertainment district.







**Ybor City is not only play-land but shopping paradise too.** Some of everything, something for everyone from smoking pipe shops, x-rated t-shirts, gold bejeweled decorated boots and lovely orchids.



**Tampa's Riverwalk is extensive.** It's said to extend longer than anywhere else in the country and it connects one entertainment district to another from downtown. It was directly across the bridge from our hotel. Clearly it's a deep water port as evidenced by the cruise ship parked Channelside.





***It's goodnight to Tampa*** after just three nights which was just enough -- though I'm sure there was more to do and hopefully Tom's Photo Show will highlight his tour of a famous old Tampa hotel now a museum and part of the University of Tampa. These pictures again are from our hotel suite.



***Saint Augustine*** – is worthy of a trip and we were glad to have all of three days and nights here and even better we were right in the center of town in a historic and luxurious hotel once owned by Henry Flagler. Foremost to the city are his three hotels. All three are in the middle of town and adjacent to each other.

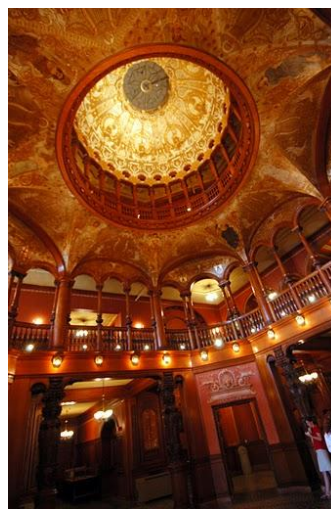
**1. Hotel Ponce de León now Flagler College** - In 1882, Henry Flagler, New York entrepreneur and cofounder of Standard Oil, became interested in the historic city of St. Augustine and its potential as a winter resort. Flagler's subsequent development of transportation and resort facilities in St. Augustine and along the east coast of Florida spurred rapid development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A focal point of this development was Flagler's Hotel Ponce de León. In 1887 Flagler hired two young architects from the prominent New York firm, McKim, Mead, and White, to design the hotel. With the design of the Ponce de Leon, John Carrere and Thomas Hastings launched a new architectural firm, Carrere & Hastings, which would gain national prominence. Flagler chose the Spanish Renaissance Revival style so that the hotel's design would complement its historic surroundings. Retained to decorate the interior of the hotel, Louis C. Tiffany used stained glass, mosaics and terra cotta relief on the walls



and ceilings and commissioned several grand murals. The hotel was the first large scale building constructed entirely of poured concrete. The popularity of "the Ponce" and its style strongly influenced the architecture of southern Florida for the next fifty years. The success of the Hotel Ponce de Leon was episodic, immediately contending with a yellow fever epidemic and the worst freeze in state history in

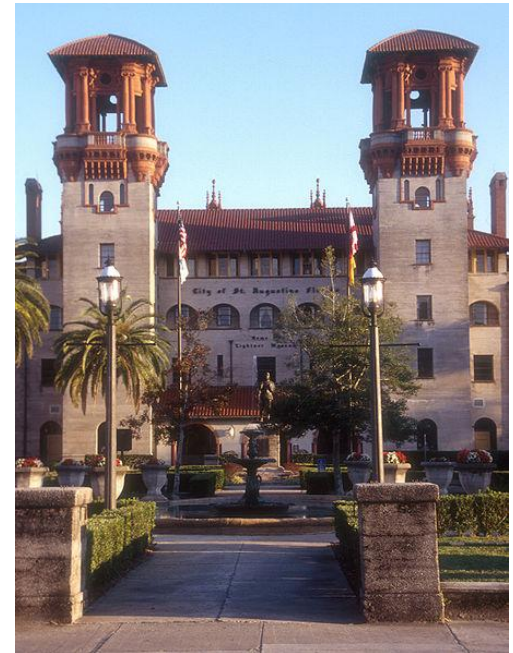


1895. St. Augustine's weather proved not to be as warm and sunny as other resort areas that were developed further south, and the town never boomed as a winter resort. However, tourists did come during the first decades of the 20th century, and the Ponce de Leon was one of only three Flagler Hotels to survive the Great Depression. Following a lull in tourism during World War II, the hotel attracted large crowds for several years, but decline resumed and in 1967 the hotel closed and was sold to Flagler College. It has been renovated and retains most of its original integrity.



**2. Alcazar Hotel now the Lightner Museum-** The 1889 Spanish Renaissance Revival style Alcazar Hotel was the second luxury hotel constructed by Henry Flagler. The design of the Alcazar was inspired by the royal palace in Seville, Spain. With its two large towers, many spires and red tile roofs, the Alcazar lives up to its name derived from the Arabic word Al-kasr or "royal castle." The St. Augustine City Hall and the Lightner Museum now occupy the hotel.

The Lightner Museum is a museum of antiquities, mostly American Victorian and now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The museum occupies three floors of the former Hotel Alcazar, commissioned by Henry M. Flagler to appeal to wealthy tourists who traveled there on his railroad, and built in 1887 in the Spanish Renaissance style. It was designed by architects Carrère and Hastings, who also designed the Ponce de León Hotel across the street. Both buildings are notable as being among the earliest examples of poured concrete buildings in the world. These architects later designed the New York Public Library and the U.S. Senate office building.



The Alcazar Hotel site had previously been the bed of Maria Sanchez Creek, and to provide fill dirt to raise the creek bed, Flagler purchased a farm north of town and had his crews dig it up and move the earth downtown. The farm was the site of the first Fort Mose, the pioneer free black settlement dating back to 1738 that was the northern defense of St. Augustine and that is today recognized as a National Historic Landmark. The hotel boasted a steam room, massage parlor, gymnasium, and sulfur baths, as well as the world's largest indoor swimming pool. However, after years as an elegant winter resort for wealthy patrons, the hotel closed in 1932. In 1946, Chicago publisher Otto C. Lightner purchased the building to house his extensive collection of Victoriana. He opened the museum two years later, and later donated it to the city of St. Augustine. The building is an attraction in itself, centering on an open palm courtyard with an arched stone bridge spanning a fishpond. The



Museum is housed in the former health facilities of the hotel, i.e., the spa and Turkish bath, as well as its three-storey ballroom. The museum's first floor houses a Victorian village, with shop fronts representing emporia selling period wares; a Victorian Science and Industry Room displays shells, rocks, minerals, and Native American artifacts in beautiful turn-of-the-20th-century cases, as well as stuffed birds, a small Egyptian mummy, model steam engines, elaborate examples of Victorian glassblowing, golden elephant bearing the world on its back, and a shrunken head; and a Music Room, filled with mechanized musical instruments—including player pianos, reproducing pianos, orchestrators, and others—dating from the 1870s through the 1920s.

The second floor contains examples of cut glass, Victorian art glass and stained glass work of Louis Comfort Tiffany's studio. The third floor, in the ballroom's upper balcony, exhibits paintings, sculpture, and furniture, include a grand escritoire created for Louis Bonaparte, King of Holland, in the period 1806-1810.

3. **Casa Monica Hotel** – This is where we stayed in the Anastasia Suite, a two level apartment with two baths, balcony, spiral staircase and kitchen/bar. It was one of the three famous Flagler hotels and it was across the corner from Flagler College, the old Ponce de Leon Hotel, and across from the Lightner Museum, the old Alcazar Hotel.



Some history: In 1887, Henry Flagler sold a parcel of land to Bostonian architect Franklin W. Smith on which Smith built the Casa Monica Hotel, naming the hotel after St. Monica, the mother of revered St. Augustine and namesake of the city. The hotel opened in 1888 with only three guests registered and was later sold to Henry Flagler a few short months later. Flagler renamed the property to Hotel Cordova and caused it to thrive, filling the hotel with many return guests and grand affairs. He later connected Hotel Cordova as an annex to The Alcazar, a neighboring hotel also owned by Flagler. The Hotel Cordova closed its doors in 1932 and was purchased 30 years later in 1962 by St. John's County to be turned

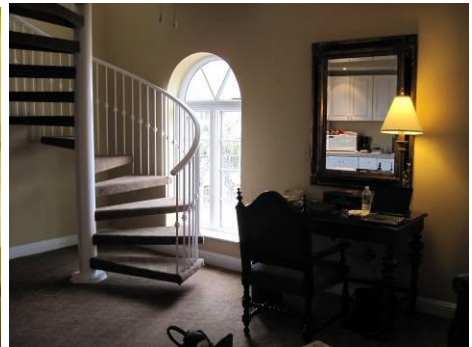


into a county courthouse. The structure served as the courthouse for another 30 years before being purchased by The Kessler Collection in 1997. Opening in 1999, the Casa Monica Hotel was restored to its original name and grandeur, operating once more as a luxurious hotel. Now celebrating 120 years in existence, the Casa Monica Hotel exemplifies the same splendor and service as it did in 1888, maintaining the original historic and majestic style while uniting it to modern luxury.



**A two story suite.** Again, we'd upgraded and it was one of the most pleasant of any hotels I've ever been in. We reviewed our history of hotel rooms and thought The Little Nell in Aspen, the Hotel Jerome also in Aspen, The Bellagio's Presidential Suite, and the Montana high above Lake Luzerne might have been of the very few hotels better than these accommodations. Sometimes The Chesterfield Hotel in Palm Beach was but we'd only taken a king room for this trip. Note the antique hand carved wooden headboard with inset mirror above.





**Still in the Casa Monica Hotel:**



**St. Augustine Town Historic District** – a National Historic Landmark, encompasses the site of the oldest continuously occupied European and African American settlements in the United States. Part of Ponce de León's 1513 claim to La Florida, St. Augustine was the site of Spanish military base established in 1565 by Don Pedro Menéndez de Avilés. The town of St. Augustine soon grew around the fort and became the seat of Spanish power in Florida. During the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, free blacks and slaves found Florida a haven--the Spanish Crown granted refuge to blacks if they embraced Catholicism. Today the district retains the distinctive plan typical of a 16th century Spanish Colonial walled town. The colonial buildings in the district date from 1703 to 1821 period. Among the most noted buildings in the district are the Plaza de la Constitución, the colonial community's focal point (King Street), the Oldest House, a traditional Spanish Colonial residence built circa 1706 and the oldest surviving residence in St. Augustine (14 St. Francis Street), the Basilica Cathedral of St. Augustine, which incorporates the 1797 parish church and is one of the oldest Catholic religious buildings in the U.S. (36 Cathedral Place), the 1883 Villa Zorayda, an exotic Moorish Revival residence with courtyards and towers (King Street), and the Gothic Revival style Stanbury Cottage (St. George Street).



**Oldest House, St. Augustine Town Plan Historic District** (Florida Department of Commerce, Division of Tourism; Robert M. Overton, photographer)

**Castillo de San Marcos National Monument** - is the oldest existing permanent seacoast fortification in the continental United States. The present star-shaped fort, surrounding moat, and earthworks were constructed between 1672 - 1756 to protect Spanish territory in Florida and the shipping routes along the Florida coast. Castillo de San Marcos replaced an earlier series of earth and wood fortifications and was the northernmost outpost of the Spanish Caribbean. It was the focus of the struggle between Great Britain and Spain for regional supremacy during the 17th and 18th centuries and was the site of a British garrison during



**Castillo de San Marcos National Monument** (NPS; Henry Hird III, photographer)



the American Revolution. The fort was last employed for defensive purposes in 1898 during the Spanish-American War.

**Daytona Beach** - On the way to Saint Augustine from Tampa we drove up the coast via AIA and through Daytona Beach right by the famous speedway. What a dump but made more interesting (and less desirable) by 500,000 motorcyclists on an annual Bike Week. Unfortunately many of those bikers came to Saint Augustine. We read that this is the largest bike show in the country (not to be confused with Sturgis SD that's that largest bike 'rally' in the country). Here, the famous Daytona 500 Speedway, their beach, and the entry way with gazillions of bikers.



**All things come to an end** and this was a successful trip, one fortunately spent with Tom, and I was to hurry home for only a short day before heading out to Annapolis for the B&A Trail Marathon.

For anyone interested in past trip reports, especially marathon related but also hiking tours, they can be seen on the website created by the tech-savvy other Liberty Lady, Maricar.

[www.LibertyLadies.weebly.com](http://www.LibertyLadies.weebly.com).

**Next up?** B&A Trail Marathon in Annapolis area on March 7<sup>th</sup>, DC National Marathon on March 20<sup>th</sup>, and Cape May's Ocean Drive Marathon on March 28<sup>th</sup>, making 7 marathons for the year before March is out, providing the legs keep moving. April brings a week's trip to L.A., South Carolina's Kings and Queens of the Mountain Marathon in SC on April 10th, Salt Lake City's Marathon on March 17<sup>th</sup>, a drop down in Kansas City for a couple days, and the MORE half marathon in NYC.

**Yes, Life Is Grand!**



## ***Itinerary***

### **Tue 2/23/10**

7:55am Depart Newark  
10:51am Arrive West Palm Beach (PBI)

Hotel The Chesterfield for 3 nights  
363 Cocoanut Row, Palm Beach, FL 33480-4539 Tele 561 659 5800

### **Fri 2/26/10**

Am Depart Palm Beach via Car to Tampa/St Petersburg, FL

10:00am Expo at Tampa Convention Center, E. Hall, 333 South Franklin Street, until 8pm  
Iva has a booth at Expo

Hotel Westin in Harbor Island, the host hotel and a Starwood/Sheraton hotel  
725 South Harbour Island Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33602 - Tele 813 229 5000

### **Sat 2/27/10**

9:30am Expo at Tampa Convention Center, E. Hall until only 3pm

### **Sun 2/28/10**

6:00am 10<sup>th</sup> annual and last Gasparilla Marathon - [www.tampabayrun.com](http://www.tampabayrun.com)  
Start and finish line ½ mile max from Sheraton or Westin at Platt Street & Parker Street

Course The 26.2-mile course starts adjacent to Publix Super Markets at Platt and Parker Streets and finishes on beautiful Bayshore Boulevard. The fast and mostly waterfront USATF Certified course showcases many of Tampa's most beautiful and historic neighborhoods including Davis Islands, Downtown Tampa, the Hillsborough River, Bayshore Boulevard, Ballast Point and Gadsden Park. The Finish Line will remain open for 7 hours (1:00 p.m.).

Food Finish line will have salad, black beans, rice & Cuban bread

### **Mon 3/01/10**

Early am Depart via rental car to St Augustine

Hotel Casa Monica Hotel  
95 Cordova Street, St Augustine, FL 32084 – Tele 904 827 1 888 or 800 648 1888

### **Thu 3/04/10**

pm Depart via rental car to Jacksonville airport (JAX) – 50 miles and 1 hour

5:30pm Depart Jacksonville (JAX)  
8:07pm Arrive Newark

FAQs from website [www.tampabayrun.com](http://www.tampabayrun.com) as of 5/31/09 – check for 2010 updates:

**How can I register?** You may register online via Active.com:

Or you may download and mail in a [2010 registration form](#)

**Can I register the day of the race?** Yes, you may register for the 15K and 5K on race day beginning at 6am.

Marathon and Half-Marathon late registration is available until the expo closes at 5pm on Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. Race Day registration is **NOT** available for the Marathon or Half Marathon and Race Weekend registration is **NOT** available for the Marathon Relay or Challenge Events.

**How can I get a 'seeded' bib number?** To obtain a seeded race number, please send a request along with your mail-in registration form. Be sure to include your PR times from the most recent races you've participated in.

**How can I check to see if I'm registered?** After you've registered, you should receive an email confirming your registration. If you wish to double-check your registration, you can do so from the check registration link on our website.

**Why haven't I received an email confirmation?** Usually the problem is that your computer's spam filter has erased or blocked the email confirmation that was sent to you. If you did not receive an email confirmation, you can check to see if you registered via the check registration link on our website.

**What happens if I register and then unable to participate?** The **Publix Super Markets Gasparilla Distance Classic Race Weekend** does not offer refunds or transfer of entries to another person. If you are registered for the **marathon** and sustain an injury, you may request to defer your entry until the next race year. If you cannot participate, you are welcome to pick up your packet and race shirt. We will not be mailing race packets to participants.

**Can I switch my registration from one event to another?** Yes, as long as you do so before **January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010**.

There is no fee for switching events, however, if you downgrade, you will not be refunded the difference in entry fees. Runners who wish to switch their registration to a longer race (half marathon to the marathon) will be charged the difference between the amount they have already paid and the current registration fee for the race to which they wish to transfer. If you participate in a race you are NOT registered for, you will NOT be eligible for overall and age group awards. If you need to switch your registration, please submit a request to the GDCA office via email: [gdca.information@verizon.net](mailto:gdca.information@verizon.net) before January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Registration changes cannot be made over the phone.

**Where does my registration fee go?** Your registration fee helps to pay for the necessary permits, supplies and personnel to make the **Publix Super Markets Gasparilla Distance Classic Race Weekend Event** a success. The Gasparilla Distance Classic Association Inc. is a not-for-profit organization that through the administration of the Gasparilla Distance Classic Race Weekend has donated over 2.8 million dollars to local Tampa Bay charities.

## **Packet Pick-Up**

**When is packet pick-up?** Packet pick-up will be held Friday, Feb. 26, 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 27, 6 a.m. until 5 p.m. The expo will be held at Race Headquarters – the Tampa Convention Center's East Hall. If you do not pick up your packet at the EXPO, you will not be able to run in your race. Packets will NOT be mailed.

**How can I find out what my bib number is?** You will be notified of your assigned number when you receive your final email confirmation in January/February 2010. You may also look up your bib number on-line from a link located on the event website. You will need to know your bib number when you come to the expo to pick-up your packet. If you forget, an alphabetical listing of all participants and their corresponding bib number will be posted at the Expo.

**What is included in my packet?** Your race bib, that has the ChronoTrack timing tags attached, along with final instructions and safety pins for your bib will be in your packet. It is extremely important that you read the final instructions



prior to race day. We will include only pertinent information to help you be more prepared for race morning. You are responsible for knowing the information that we provide to you in the final instructions.

**What do I need to bring with me to pick up my packet?** Every participant will receive a final confirmation e-mail if you provided a valid mailing address during registration. Bring photo ID and a printed copy of your confirmation e-mail to the EXPO to pick up your packet.

**Can a friend pick up my packet for me?** Yes. Please have your friend bring your final email confirmation with them to pick up your packet. They will have to sign a release indicating that they have picked up your packet.

**When will I receive my final confirmation?** Final confirmations will be sent in late January, early February 2010. A final confirmation e-mail will be sent to the e-mail address you provided on your registration form. Please note that e-mails are sent in bulk and may be rejected by your spam filter if you have one.

**Why do I need my final confirmation?** We ask that you review the information printed on the card for accuracy. This is the perfect time to let us know if your address has changed or will change and if your gender and age is correct. This will ensure proper division placement for the official race results.

**What if I don't receive my final confirmation?** If for any reason you don't receive your final confirmation you may request a replacement to be re-emailed from the Active registration page or you may print a copy of your confirmation from the check registration link on our website.

**I am planning to arrive in Tampa on Sunday, February 10th. Will I be able to pick up my race packet race morning?** You're cutting it close and there will be very limited Packet Pick-Up on Race Day, Sunday, Feb. 28. Requests for Race Day Packet Pick-up must be made in writing and no later than Sunday, February 14, 2010. To request Race Day Packet Pick-up, please send an email to [gdca.information@verizon.net](mailto:gdca.information@verizon.net)

## **Start and Finish Area**

**Where does the race start and finish?** All races begin and end in downtown Tampa, near the Tampa Convention Center. Detailed maps can be accessed from the course map section of the event website.

**Where can I meet my family and friends after the race?** The easiest way to find your family and friends after the race is to have a plan beforehand. An easy place to meet up post-race is at the Tampa Convention Center, Franklin street entrance.

**Where should I park?** There are many city parking lots and on-street parking close to the start and finish line. Expect to pay \$5 for all-day parking with no in-and-out privileges. A map of parking garages close to the start and finish area is posted on our website.

**What time should I get there on race day?** We suggest that runners arrive at the Tampa Convention Center at least one hour before the start of your event. The Tampa Police Department will begin closing streets in and around downtown very early. Please keep in mind that you may have to fight traffic and may have to park a few blocks away from the Tampa Convention Center. Give yourself some extra time to make sure you get to there on time!

**Are shuttles available?** Yes, shuttles are available on Sunday morning for Marathon Relay participants and spectators.

Relay Team Bus Drop-Off/Pick-Up Locations:

Tampa Convention Center – at Franklin Street Entrance

Bayshore Boulevard & Bay to Bay Miles 16 & 24

Bayshore Boulevard & Gandy Boulevard Miles 17.5 & 22

The bus will leave the downtown Tampa Pick-Up/Drop-Off Location (Tampa Convention Center– at Franklin Street Entrance– see #3 on Marathon Location Map) and will run continuously from 7:00am – Noon making stops at two drop-off locations every 15 minutes and returning downtown every 30 minutes.

**Can I wear my IPOD or MP3 player during the race?** In December, USATF has adopted a rule (144.3 (b)) which bans the use of headphones and other music devices at all USATF-sanctioned running events. The Gasparilla Distance Classic Race weekend is a USATF sanctioned event. Wearing a music device is highly discouraged during any event race weekend. If you do decide to wear a music device and a complaint is made, you run the risk of being ineligible for an award if you qualify for one.

**Are jogging strollers allowed?** Jogging strollers are NOT allowed in any of the Publix Super Markets Gasparilla Distance Classic Open 5K, 15K, Marathon, and Half Marathon. You may, however, participate in the Kellogg's "Special K" 5K Walk and Stroller Roll that will take place Saturday morning, Feb 27, 2010, following the start of the Open 5K event by 20 min. More details about this event can be viewed on the event website.

## **Baggage Check**

**Where is the baggage check located?** The baggage check is located in The Tampa Convention Center, meeting room 24 & 25 (downstairs)

**How do I check my bag and claim it once the race is over?** You will find a baggage check tag attached to your race bib. The tag is printed with your bib number. Detach the tag and attach it to your bag, and bring your bag to the baggage check-in. After the race, return to the baggage check and show the attendant your bib in order to retrieve your bag.

**What happens to my bag if I forget to claim it after the race?** The baggage check closes at 1:00 p.m. on race day and all bags must be picked up before that time. The Gasparilla Distance Classic Association Inc. is not responsible for bags that are not picked up by 1:00 p.m.

**How many bags can I check?** Due to space limitations, we are only able to check one bag per runner.

**Can I leave jewelry, computers or other valuables at the baggage check?** We strongly recommend that you leave your valuables at home. The Gasparilla Distance Classic Association Inc. is not responsible for lost or stolen property, including any and all property checked at the baggage check.

## **Course**

**What are the time limits for the marathon and half marathon?** The Finish Line will remain open for 7-hours (1:00 p.m.). All athletes participating in the Marathon must be able to maintain at least a 16-minute per mile pace throughout the race, finishing the Marathon in less than 7-hours.

**Please note that there will be time requirements at two locations of the marathon course.** Those marathon participants not able to maintain a 16-minute per mile pace and complete the Davis Island portion of the course (first six miles) by 7:45 a.m. will be directed into the half marathon. Additionally, those marathon participants not able to maintain a 16-minute per mile pace and reach the half-way point (13.1 miles) by 9:30am will be moved to the sidewalk for the remainder of the marathon. At Noon (6 hours), those remaining on the course will be moved to the Bayshore Boulevard sidewalk. Aid Stations, Clocks, Mile Markers, and the Finish Line will also be moved to the sidewalk. Please note that the Finish Line (including the ChronoTrack Timing System) will remain open until the last marathon participant crosses the Finish Line. The Gasparilla Distance Classic Association board members will be waiting at the Finish Line with Finisher's Medals.

**Why is there a time limit?** In order to comply with the Publix Super Markets Gasparilla Distance Classic Race Weekend's agreement with the City of Tampa, streets comprising the route must be reopened to vehicular traffic on a set schedule.

## **Weather**



**What is the weather typically like on marathon day?** No predictions here! Just averages from previous Tampa Gasparilla Marathons:

Average low temperature: 51F

Average high temperature: 71F

Mean average temperature: 61.5F

**What happens if it rains?** The race will go on regardless of precipitation. The race will only be cancelled if weather conditions present imminent danger to participants. The Publix Super Markets Gasparilla Distance Classic Race Weekend has never been cancelled in any of its 32 years.

## ChronoTrack Timing & Tracking System

**What is tag time and how is it different from gun time?** Tag time is recorded by RFID technology that is attached to a runner's shoe. Your ChronoTrack device records the time at which you cross the start line, the finish line and several split times in between. Tag time is often shorter than gun time because tag time begins when a runner crosses the start line while gun time starts when the gun is fired; many runners don't cross the start line until several minutes after their official gun time has begun.

**Why use ChronoTrack timing?** Tag time is a more accurate measure than gun time of how long it takes a runner to complete the race. Gun time is only 100% accurate for the first row of runners, who cross the start line when the gun sounds. Runners who are farther back are "on the clock" before they even cross the start line, making their gun time longer than the time it actually took them to complete the course.

**What happens if I lose my ChronoTrack timing tag?** If you lose your ChronoTrack tag, you will not have an official time and will not be recorded as an official finisher of your race. This means that you will not be able to use your race time to qualify for other races, such as the Boston Marathon.

**What if the tag gets wet?** The tag is completely weatherproof and will work regardless of rain, heat, storms, humidity or other inclement conditions. To see a video of the tag working in water please [click here](#).

**How accurate is ChronoTrack timing?** Tag time is the most accurate form of marathon timing available because it measures the exact time between a runner crossing the start line and the finish line. Tag time also records several important splits, providing an accurate record of a runner's pace.

**Will the ChronoTrack tag interfere with my running?** In a word: no. The tag is simply a flat laminated piece of paper that is about 1" x 6" and will be looped through the laces of the shoe. If attached properly you won't even know that it's there. To see a video instructions on how to properly attach the tag onto your shoe please [click here](#)

**I own a ChampionChip. Can I use it instead of the timing tag?** No, personal ChampionChips may not be used. All runners must use the timing tag provided with their packet. The timing mats along the course will not pick up the signal from any ChampionChip device.

## Scoring

**Is ChronoTrack tag time or gun time used to determine prizes?** According to USATF rules, gun time is used to determine prize money winners and time bonus recipients. ChronoTrack tag time will be used to determine all age-group winners and other award recipients.

## Boston Qualifying

**Can I use my Tampa's Gasparilla Marathon time to qualify for the Boston Marathon?** Yes, you can. The Boston Marathon accepts qualifying times from the Tampa Gasparilla Marathon. Qualifying times for the 2010 Boston Marathon vary by age group and a complete breakdown of qualifying times can be found on the BAA website. The Tampa's Gasparilla Marathon will send a complete list of finishers to the BAA about a week after the race.

**How do I submit my time to the Boston Marathon?** When registering for the Boston Marathon, enter your finishing time, finishing place, the race name and location and the date of the race in the section entitled "Qualification Information." Be sure to indicate if the time you enter is gun time or chip time.

**Will the Boston Marathon check to confirm my time?** Yes. The Boston Marathon automatically receives a list of all official finishers of the Tampa Gasparilla Marathon and their chip and gun times. The time that you put on your Boston Marathon registration will be checked against the official time that they have on file.

## Runner Goodies

**Besides the chance to run in one of the nation's premiere marathons, what do I get for my registration fee?**

Runners in all will receive a participation shirt, goodie bag, finisher's medal, on-course and post race refreshments. Runners are also invited to attend the two-day 8 On Your Side Health and Fitness Expo on the Friday and Saturday before the event at the Tampa Convention Center. Many vendors give out free samples and branded items.

From [www.marathonguide.com](http://www.marathonguide.com)

Email: [gdcarun@verizon.net](mailto:gdcarun@verizon.net)

Official Race Website: <http://www.tampabayrun.com>

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## Race Organizer Comments

**A Note of Thanks!**

Susan Harmeling (4/24/06)

A NOTE OF THANKS! - Susan Harmeling, Race Director

On Saturday morning, February 25, more than 12,000 runners and walkers participated in either the 2006 Bank of America Gasparilla Distance Classic 15K or 5K. The 15K/5K participants and spectators enjoyed perfect weather, a cool breeze, 1,500+ volunteers and entertainment too. From beginning to end, a great day was had by all who participated.

On Sunday morning however, the weather and day were not quite as perfect. At approximately 4:30 a.m., a strong line of thunderstorms and lightning rumbled through South Tampa. For approximately one hour and for the safety of the Race Operations Crew, all Race Day preparations stopped.

The se ...

[Click here for more](#)

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## Runner Comments

**I have run this marathon, and I want to [add my comments](#) about it.**

Number of comments: **169** [displaying comments **1 to 11**]

More Comments: [ < [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) [7](#) .. [17](#) > ]

Average Ratings: Course - ★★★★★ Organization - ★★★★★ Fans - ★★★★★

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★★★★★ **Good first-race experience.** (about: 2009)

**Course: 4 Organization: 4 Fans: 4**

R. G. from Davenport, IA (6/16/09)

1 previous marathon | 1 Gasparilla Distance Classic

I walked the half. Overall, I had a great time. My only complaint would be about the pass through downtown near the finish line. I was walking, and actually one of the last to cover the route. As we passed to the right of the finish chute and began our loop through downtown, the course was not well marked and we weren't even sure we were on course. Some who had already finished the race crossed through the course just beyond the finish line and seemed unaware that they were crossing through. I finished after the real medals were gone, but I greatly appreciate the fact that I received a real medal in the mail. It's awesome. The entire event was encouraging to someone who hopes to walk a half in every state and chose this one to start with. I'd love to come back, but I've got 49 others to do first!

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★★★★☆ **Outside of the course, there's room to improve** (about: 2009)

**Course: 5 Organization: 3 Fans: 3**

C. G. from Sarasota, FL (4/14/09)

2 previous marathons | 1 Gasparilla Distance Classic

This is my second year running Gasparilla. I ran the 15K in 2008 and the half in 2009.

Pros:

Beautiful course

Plenty of water stations



Right time of year and early start  
Convenient location  
Large expo  
Good food at the end  
Great finisher's medal  
Quality race shirt  
Body wrap at the finish

Cons:

They ran out of shirts for those pre-registered before 2:00 the day prior  
Heavy congestion for the first mile-plus  
The race packet contained little  
There were few trash cans at the finish  
No recycling  
They ran out of medals if you were slow (though I got mine)

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★★★★★ **Great job** (about: 2009)

**Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 5**

*Billy Graham* from Tampa, FL (4/8/09)

11-50 previous marathons | 3 Gasparilla Distance Classics

Great job on the marathon in difficult conditions.

In regard to the earlier comment:

"Keep the PRAYER at the start - a little thankfulness in today's world is needed."

I disagree... not everyone who runs the race is a Christian, or has any type of faith. Whereas I do not personally take offense, some do. So out of respect for "everyone's" religious views, I think we should separate religious customs from running events (unless they are promulgated by a religious faith based organization).

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★★★★★ **Count me in for the 2010 Challenge again.** (about: 2009)

**Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 4**

*M. R.* from Orlando, Florida (3/15/09)

6-10 previous marathons | 2 Gasparilla Distance Classics

This was my second Gasparilla Classic and I WILL BE BACK!!!!

I ran the Bud Challenge, and so my comments will relate to all three races.

Pros:

Easy PARKING close to the convention and the start/finish line.

EXPO is good for a mid-tier marathon.

The convention center was open on race days with real toilets - not port-a-johns.

Great MEDALS - all four of them. I like the medal for the challenge versus the coffee cup they gave out last year.

Keep the PRAYER at the start - a little thankfulness in today's world is needed.

Finish line FOOD was top of the line and plenty of it.

Cons:

On the 5K and the 15K courses, they need pace signage. Way too many walkers and kids were at the very front of the line, creating bottlenecks in the first quarter mile.

The full/half course slows down on the bridge, as the course is thinner. That causes a bit of a problem for keeping one's stride.

The weather was windy on Sunday, but they have no control over that.

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★★★★★ **Half Marathoner: Nice course, well organized** (about: 2009)

**Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 4**

*K. N.* from Detroit, MI (3/10/09)

1 previous marathon

This is only my second half-marathon, and I participated as a walker. I really enjoyed the course; the volunteers were great, and food was plentiful. Overall, a "walker-friendly" event. Great food at the finish. The expo was "easy in and out" and had some good samples.

I will consider adding this to my FL vacation in the future.

Weather was a bit rough - rain and wind.

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★★★★★ **well done** (about: 2009)

**Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 4**

r. r. from blairsville ga usa (3/7/09)

**6-10** previous marathons | **1** Gasparilla Distance Classic

Well organized, and the many bands and fans were great. Weather and wind were a problem, but not a bad as they could have been. I wish a better map of the course had been provided. Some of the half-marathoners (walkers) were somewhat in the way at about the 13-mile marker. I would do it again; great job by everyone!!!

---

★★★★☆ **Nice, flat course, but the weather was terrible** (about: 2009)

**Course: 4 Organization: 4 Fans: 4**

V. P. from New Jersey (3/6/09)

**6-10** previous marathons

The course was very flat - it definitely has the potential to be a PR race. This was my first Gasparilla Marathon and I enjoyed it. The only complaint I had was the weather... it was terrible. This was my 7th marathon and my first one I am commenting on. I read the other comments and saw people writing that the weather was perfect! The weather was perfect for about 45 minutes to an hour. After that, it was horrible. All in all, I did have my 2nd fastest time, but it was challenging with the weather. As with any race, the weather can't be controlled; but the organization and logistics were very good. I will run this race again. I also enjoyed the city of Tampa

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★★★★☆ **The best half you will find** (about: 2009)

**Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 3**

m. m. from Tampa, FL (3/6/09)

**11-50** previous marathons | **4-5** Gasparilla Distance Classics

I've run the marathon once and this was my fourth straight half. Once again the expo was great. It was very easy to get my number and shirt. The expo itself had the usual selections, which never interest me much anyway except for the Sports Authority, which has some very cool looking event shirts.

The start was organized, there were plenty of port-a-potties, and the convention center was open. The start was on time and the water stations were plentiful and well manned.

You will be hard-pressed to find a better half-marathon course. That said, I will never run the marathon with its current layout. I was one of the faster half runners, so heading toward the finish I saw the congestion that the marathoners had to endure as the merged with the half runners around their 11-mile mark. They would also rejoin the really slow half runners at the 23-mile mark. This race is really geared toward the half runners and will never be considered much of a marathon until they change the course.

And what's with the group prayer before the start? This guy went on for over a minute. Maybe the organizers can keep their personal beliefs personal.

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★★★★☆ **Good course, my favorite medal yet** (about: 2009)

**Course: 4 Organization: 4 Fans: 3**

E. F. from Melbourne, FL (3/6/09)

**4-5** previous marathons

I thought this was a nice race and I was only about 2 minutes off my best marathon time despite the bad weather. The course looked like it would've been really beautiful along the water if it had been sunny out. Completely flat.

The expo was good, but I really only go to pick up my number. I liked the pirate theme and loved the medal; it's my favorite yet.

Really easy start to get to and not very crowded, compared to some other races. I just hopped right in around where my time would be, and was off.

I loved the huge group of volunteers out on the course with about 4 or 2 miles to go. Can't remember exactly where now, but they were great. The marathon got a little lonely, and although I finished at a pretty good time for women, I felt like the marathon had the feel that



it was closing down towards the end even though there would've still been people finishing for a few hours.

Thank you to the man in the 3:30 pace group who gave me his Gatorade when I missed it and could only get water! That was so nice of him. The pace group leader was really nice and encouraging. It was hard weaving through miles 11 to 14 or so, with the tail end of the half marathoners on the course.

Real nice marathon and I'm sure my impression would've been a lot better if it was better weather. Can't control everything, though - at least it wasn't raining at the start!

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★★★★★ **Brutal Weather/Nice Event** (about: 2009)

**Course: 5 Organization: 4 Fans: 4**

Scott Curtis from Columbus, OH (3/6/09)

**First Marathon**

This was my first marathon and I was looking forward to running in warm weather after training in the cold. Oh well, that was shot after 13 miles with rain, rain, rain and lots of high winds.

I had read previous years' comments about merging with the half marathon at mile 11 and didn't think it would be a problem, but it actually was a bit annoying. Also, why not run through downtown while it's dark and then enjoy Davis Island in the daylight?

I was pleasantly surprised at the amount of support considering the weather and the "Let Me Play" kids were fantastic!

Water was unevenly spaced, but there were so many stations that it didn't matter. Gels and oranges were also offered quite frequently.

Course was scenic and interesting most of the way. Very flat... I don't even remember a hill!

Medal was great (but I love pirates).

Post-race food was the best ever - Spanish rice and black beans. Free beer was nowhere to be found.

# JOURNEYS; 36 Hours | St. Augustine, Fla.

By ROBERT ANDREW POWELL from 2003

AMERICA'S oldest continuously populated city, St. Augustine takes its history seriously. Weekends bring military re-enactments, blacksmiths in period costume and wenches slinging pints in bars that might as well be named Ye Old Drinking Hole. Yet St. Augustine is also a beautiful and laid-back Southern town, with a naturally attractive waterfront with some of the oldest and most distinctive architecture in the New World. Located on the northeast coast of Florida, and long a way station for families driving to Orlando or Miami, St. Augustine retains a share of the wax museums and alligator farms that define Old Florida tourism. The city is still family-friendly, but even the urbane can appreciate a restored luxury hotel or a 300-year-old house turned into a quaint bed-and-breakfast. Standing in the central plaza, with a fife and drum company marching past, it's possible to slip back centuries to a time when St. Augustine thrived as a military outpost and vital colonial port for Spain. It's also possible to step into a storefront art gallery and ignore that parade altogether. ROBERT ANDREW POWELL

Friday - 6:30 p.m.

## 1. Deep-Fried Friendliness

St. Augustine's historic old city abuts the marshy banks of Matanzas Bay. Take the Bridge of Lions across the bay to the more modern commercial strip on Anastasia Island. Then step in line. O'Steen's restaurant (205 Anastasia Boulevard, 904-829-6974) is so popular that dinnertime waits of an hour or more are routine. Expectant patrons sit on a worn wooden bench in the parking lot, gazing into the kitchen windows at cooks preparing unpretentious deep-fried food. Fried butterflied shrimp is the house specialty (\$10.95 for nine). Humble side orders, from pole beans to squash casserole, are notably fresh. The restaurant is profoundly casual and good for families. Oil-painted shrimp boats sail across the walls. A scale-model shrimp boat floats on a fireplace mantel. The 65-seat dining room is so small it seems as if everyone is eating at the same table. Diners show pictures of their grandchildren to those sitting next to them. Alcohol and credit cards are the only things unwelcome.

## 2. A Grand Hotel

At night, cicadas and frogs harmonize with the cobblestone-street clomp of horseshoes from passing tourist buggies. It's a good time to walk around the Hotel Ponce de León (74 King Street). Henry Flagler, the oil tycoon and tourism evangelist, conquered St. Augustine in the late 1800's, hoping to create a "winter Newport" for America's moneyed elite. This hotel was his masterpiece. Built in Spanish Renaissance Revival style and embellished with Tiffany mosaics and stained-glass windows, the Ponce de León hung on until 1967, long after Mr. Flagler's attention had drifted down to Palm Beach. Now functioning as the unusual campus of Flagler College, a small liberal arts school, the hotel remains marvelous, even from the outside. One-hour guided tours of the building are \$5 per person and leave at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. (904-823-3378).

## 3. Drink In History

In the Great Depression, St. Augustine slipped into a decline, and it has only recently recovered. The Casa Monica (95 Cordova Street, 904-827-1888) is the latest example of the city's rebirth. Although this hotel was not built by Mr. Flagler, he folded it into his empire, and guests were pampered here from 1888 to 1932. The building sat vacant for 30 years, operated for a while as a county courthouse, and only in 1999 reopened as a luxury hotel. The opulent lobby is furnished with hand-painted Italian tile and couches upholstered in rich silks.



In the Cobalt Lounge (95 Cordova Street, 904-819-6020), a glamorous crowd sips hibiscus martinis and espresso, Cognacs and cappuccino.

Saturday - 8:30 a.m.

#### 4. Breakfast in the Old City

Pedestrian St. George Street is the main commercial boulevard of the city's historic district. The Bunnery Bakery and Cafe (121 St. George Street, 904-829-6166) sweetens the strip every morning with the aroma of breads and pastries like cinnamon rolls (\$1.75), spinach-and-feta-filled croissants (\$2.55) and double-wide muffins (\$1.50). Cash only.

#### 5. House With a Past

Settled by the Spanish in 1565 -- decades before the founding of Jamestown or Plymouth -- St. Augustine became a diplomatic pawn passed to the British in exchange for Havana, then back to the Spanish, then finally sold to the United States along with the rest of Florida in 1821. (A halfhearted fling with the Confederacy followed.) The Oldest House (14 St. Francis Street, 904-824-2872) showcases 400 years of history. It features a detached kitchen, a Spanish hallmark, and an American Territorial period bedroom, which has a canopied four-poster bed of carved mahogany. The museum is like an 18th-century twist on a cable-TV makeover show: While you were out, the British redecorated the living room. Open for guided tours 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. every day. Admission is \$6 for adults.

#### 6. Collectible Culture

Across the street from the Ponce de León and alongside Casa Monica stands Henry Flagler's third grand hotel, the Alcazar. Built in 1888 and modeled after the royal palace in Seville, Spain, the Alcazar closed (along with Casa Monica) after the 1931 winter season. The front of the restored hotel now serves as City Hall for St. Augustine. The rest of the building has been turned over to the Lightner Museum (75 King Street, 904-824-2874), which showcases some 20,000 examples of Victoriana, from marbles to gramophones, seashells to quilts. A lion preserved by taxidermy guards the first floor. It is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$6 for adults and \$2 for students.

#### 7. Fortify I

Have lunch at the Milltop Tavern and Listening Room (19 1/2 St. George Street, 904-829-2329). Scratch initials into the woodwork while drinking beer and gnawing on chicken wings (\$6.50) or a roast beef sandwich (\$5.95).

#### 8. Fortify II

Across Route A1A from the Milltop Tavern sits the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument (1 South Castillo Drive, 904-829-6506), which anchored St. Augustine's defenses against invasions by ambitious British governors, among others. Thirty-foot-high walls of coquina rock, according to legend, are pockmarked with cannonballs fired by invading pirates, although it has not been proved. A tour inside the fort costs \$5 for adults. It may be more appealing outside, standing on the sea wall looking east. Even with waterfront mansions lining Anastasia Island across the bay, it is easy to envision tall ships slipping through the inlet after a perilous journey from the Old World.

#### 9. Urban Cuisine

Cross the bridge again for dinner at what many locals consider the best restaurant in town, the Gypsy Cab Company (828 Anastasia Boulevard, 904-824-8244), and again prepare for a wait of up to an hour. On a menu that changes nightly, the sautéed grouper with spinach and crab in a balsamic vinaigrette (\$17.50) is excellent.

#### 10. After-Hour Ales

Sample handmade beers at the A1A Ale House, a rollicking brew pub downstairs from a popular restaurant (1 King Street, 904-829-2977). The roster of beers changes seasonally. Fresh-made root beer is also available (\$1.95 a glass). A blues band tucked into a corner bounces through standards lively enough to incite dancing.

Sunday - 9 a.m.

#### 11. Breakfast on the Beach

Nearby St. Augustine Beach is a typical Florida surf town. Rows of motels and ramshackle vacation houses line a renourished strip of almond-colored sand. The Beachcomber (2 A Street, 904-471-3744) is popular for its sunrise breakfasts. Surfers set aside their boards to sample oversized pancakes (\$4.25), which can be personalized with blueberries, bananas or pecans for 50 cents more.

#### 12. Climb Toward the Light

The regal St. Augustine Lighthouse (81 Lighthouse Avenue, 904-829-0745) guided ships into St. Augustine's port for nearly a hundred years. By the 1960's, like much of the city over which its beacon shone, the abandoned lighthouse had fallen into disrepair. After a 14-year, \$1.2 million restoration, the lighthouse shines again as a nautical museum. Climb the spiraling 219 cast-iron steps to the observation deck to enjoy a panoramic view of the Matanzas River and the red-and-gold skyline of the old city. Admission is \$6.95.

### THE BASICS

#### Visiting St. Augustine

St. Augustine is a satellite of Jacksonville, one of the largest cities in the United States (area-wise, at least). Located 52 miles south of the Jacksonville airport, St. Augustine is a straight shot down Interstate 95.

The beautifully restored Casa Monica (95 Cordova Street, 800-648-1888) is the best hotel in town. Its 138 individually decorated rooms range in price from \$159 a night to \$999 a night for a multifloor suite.

St. Augustine's oldest continually operating hostelry, the bed-and-breakfast St. Francis Inn (279 St. George Street, 800-824-6062) is a standout in a town of good B&B's. Amenities include passes to a local gym, free bicycles for touring the old city and an evening social hour. The 14 rooms are \$109 to \$199.