THE FLORIDA KEYS

More than single entities, the Florida Keys are a collection of islands linked together by the Overseas Highway and divided into 3 distinct groups: the Upper, Middle and Lower keys. Within these groups are individual keys; each with their own flair and flavor. From Key Largo to Key West there is more to see and do than you can imagine; so we compiled this list of our favorites to share with you.

With its' centralized location, the Big Pine Key Fishing Lodge (BPKFL) is the perfect home base from which you can take advantage of everything the Florida Keys has to offer. We know your trip will be the vacation of a lifetime and we look forward to seeing you on the BPKFL "Liar's Bench" sharing stories of your adventures.

UPPER KEYS

Key Largo
As the gateway to the Florida Keys, it would be easy to drive through Key Largo and miss all the wonderful things this island has to offer. More than just a place to stop for gas, there are plenty of reasons to get out of the car and stay awhile if you just know where to look.

Overview:
Population: 12,971
Area: 15.3 sq. miles (39.63 km²)

For families:
Harry Harris Park and Beach
Jacob’s Aquatics Center
Glass Bottom Boat Tours

Playgrounds:
Old Settler’s Park
Friendship Park
Key Largo Community Park

Don’t miss:
John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park
Swim with Dolphins
For Divers: Florida Keys National Maritime Sanctuary and the wreck of the Spiegel Grove

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Islamorada

Full of amazing restaurants and wonderful shopping, Islamorada adds its own unique romance to the Florida Keys; but look beyond the surface and you will see one of the most spectacular natural environments in the world. Islamorada occupies an enviable position between the saltwater wilderness of Everglades National Park, North America’s only coral barrier reef and the deep blue waters of the Florida Straits. This prime location makes it more than just a place to get dinner or buy a souvenir; it make it a special place where once-in-a-lifetime memories can be made.

Overview:
Population: 6,119
Area: 7.3 sq. mi (18.8 km²)

For families:
Theater of the Sea Marine Mammal Park
Founders Park
Indian Key State Historic Site

Don’t miss:
History of Diving Museum
Rain Barrel Artesian Village
Hurricane Monument
Hang Gliding

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MIDDLE KEYS

Marathon

Boasting an airport, hospital and one of the largest populations in the Florida Keys, Marathon has a ton to offer the vacationer in-the-know. A world-famous sportfishing destination, Marathon hosts several large tournaments and community events each year. Beyond fishing, the island is home to a wide range of activities that the whole family can enjoy.

Overview:
Population: 8,387
Area: 9.6 sq. miles (24.86 km²)
Elevation:

For families:
Dolphin Research Center
Turtle Hospital
Crane Point Museum & Nature Center

Playgrounds:
Rotary Field of Dreams
Marathon Community Park

Don’t miss:
Pigeon Key Preservation
Curry Hammock State Park
Sombrero Beach
Seahed Key

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Big Pine Key (Home of the Big Pine Key Fishing Lodge)

What do you get when you combine pristine waters, gorgeous sunsets and unspoiled landscapes? You get the perfect place to fish, explore, enjoy and relax. From here, you can take advantage of all the Florida Keys has to offer. Centrally located, Big Pine Key makes a great home base for your vacation; giving you easy access to all the other islands. And since much of Big Pine Key is protected habitat for the Key Deer, its waters boast some of the best kayaking, boating, fishing, snorkeling, lobestering and diving in all of the Florida Keys.

Overview:
Population: 5,032
Area: 10 sq. miles (25.9 km²)
Elevation: 3’ 3” (1.00 m)

Special feature: Key Deer

Big Pine Key is home to the endangered Key Deer, a subspecies of the white-tailed deer that lives exclusively in the Florida Keys. Significantly smaller than deer found elsewhere an adult male (known as a buck) weighs 55–75 lbs. and stands just two and a half feet (30 in) tall at the shoulder. They are reddish-brown to grey-brown in color.

In 1947 the Key Deer population was estimated at approximately 50 deer. Two years later President Harry Truman dedicated the Everglades National Park and shortly thereafter Congress passed bill HR1058 to create a National Wildlife Refuge for the deer. The efforts to protect the species were successful which was evident when the number of the deer tripled from 50 to more than 90 within the next three years.

Today, the Key Deer have little natural fear of man. They feel right at home with people and can be seen around the island grazing in yards and along roadsides. To reduce the risk of collisions, the speed limit on Big Pine Key is 45 mph in the daytime and 35 mph at night. Visitors to Big Pine Key are asked not to feed or disturb the deer, but photos and
"oohs!" and "ahhhs!" are always welcome.

**Big Pine Key Fishing Lodge: Fish, Enjoy, Explore, Relax in Paradise**

Big Pine Key Fishing Lodge (BPKFL) occupies ten pristine acres between the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. **Perfectly positioned** in the middle keys at MM33, the BPKFL offers a friendly home-base from which to enjoy all the Florida Keys has to offer.

The BPKFL has several **lodging options** to choose from including motel rooms, rustic campsites, electric/water RV sites and even waterfront sites. With a boat ramp and canals, you can put your boat in the water (and leave it in the water) during your stay. This idea of "boat-side" camping gives you the freedom to jump in your boat and go when the mood strikes.

Our 2000 square foot **camp store** is stocked with everything you need to be comfortable at camp and out on the water. This includes food, beverages and snacks plus fishing and marine supplies like marine gas, bait and basic water sports equipment. We are one of the few campgrounds in the area where you can come with an empty cooler and get everything you need right on property.

Recreation is a big part of life in the Florida Keys and at the BPKFL we have the facilities to help you make the most of your vacation. Play ping-pong, take a long walk on the beach or just relax under a palm tree; do as much or as little as you care to do. From our 25,000 gallon roof top pool to our calendar of parties and **planned activities**, BPKFL has something for visitors of all ages.

If you need anything at all, please call our office at 305-872-2351 or complete our **contact form** and a member of the Big Pine Key Fishing Lodge will return your call within 24 hours. Whether this is your first visit to BPKFL or your fiftieth, we look forward to sharing our little slice of paradise with you.

Click here to see a **map** of all the BPKFL has to offer.

Located at 33000 Overseas Highway, MM 33 Big Pine Key, Florida 33043.

For families:
- National Key Deer Refuge
- Blue Hole
- Veteran's Memorial Park and Beach

Playgrounds:
- Blue Heron Park
- Watson Field and South Street Playground

Don't miss:
- Bahia Honda State Park & Beach
- Tarpon fishing
- Put a dollar on the ceiling at No Name Pub
- For divers: Looe Key National Marine Sanctuary

**LOWER KEYS**

**Key West**

When a Jimmy Buffet song comes on the radio, Key West is where your mind travels. With historical buildings, quirky locals and a laid-back lifestyle, Key West embodies the island way of life. Just a stone’s throw from Cuba, Key West has a long history of extremes - pirates and presidents, battleships and bootleggers - making it unlike any other place you will ever visit.

**Overview:**
- Population: 24,909
- Area: 7.4 sq. miles (25.9 km²)
- 90 miles from Cuba

For families:
- Key West Butterfly and Nature Conservatory
- U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Ingham Maritime Museum
- Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center
- Fort Zachary Taylor State Park and Beach

Playgrounds:
- Astro City
- Bayview Park

Don't miss:
- Mallory Square at Sunset
- Harry S. Truman Little White House
- Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum
- Southernmost Buoy
- Dry Tortugas National Park
- For divers: Vandenberg Wreck

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