

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Yes, you can vacation during a recession! These cost-saving tips stretch summer travel budgets at The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel**

LEE COUNTY, FL--Summer will be gone before you know it!

For visitors looking for a place to escape the day-to-day stress and to get back in touch with what's really important, The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel is offering lots of ways to vacation during a recession. There has never been a better time to take advantage of a trip to this Florida destination.

Summer is one of the best times of year to visit because travelers can live like a local and enjoy a laid-back lifestyle with fewer crowds. Visitors have an opportunity to explore this unspoiled island sanctuary on southwest Florida's Gulf coast with value rates and packages this summer. With exciting attractions, shelling, fishing, unique shopping and art galleries, waterside dining, kayaking and accommodations from quaint cottages to upscale resorts and everything in between, the destination offers money-saving offers this time of year and into fall and beyond.

Take advantage of these recession-proof tips to save on vacations at The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel:

1. Substantial summer vacation values are available with the *Summer Sanctuary* promotion. The program combines cost-saving packages with some of the area's nature and history-based attractions and activities. Check out the details at [www.FortMyersSanibel.com](http://www.FortMyersSanibel.com).
2. Some of the best activities along The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel are FREE!  
Start a shell collection.  
Kayak for miles on the Great Calusa Blueway.  
Walk miles of award-winning, white sand beaches.  
View wildlife in its natural habitat: birds, dolphins, manatees, turtles and more.

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Sanibel & Captiva Islands Fort Myers Beach Fort Myers Bonita Springs Estero Cape Coral Pine Island Boca Grande & Outer Islands North Fort Myers Lehigh Acres

Go fishing.

Visit unusual art galleries.

Stroll Sanibel Lighthouse Boardwalk.

Watch spectacular sunsets and look for the "Green Flash."

Swim/snorkel in the Gulf of Mexico.

Explore J.N. "Ding" Darling Visitor Center.

3. Bring the entire family to the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island, one of the most popular area attractions. Visitors discover the more than 6,400-acre refuge on foot or bicycle (\$1 per person) or by car (\$5) Canoe rentals are also available. Visit [www.fws.gov/dingdarling](http://www.fws.gov/dingdarling).
4. Consider renting a condo where money can be saved on meals, as well as on the accommodation for a family or large party. For a list of deals on condos, visit [www.FortMyersSanibel.com](http://www.FortMyersSanibel.com).
5. When making reservations or purchasing attraction tickets, be sure to ask for discounts (AARP, AAA, etc.).
6. Consider staying at a campground and making it an adventure! Save on accommodations at Cayo Costa State Park with nine miles of beautiful beaches and acres of pine forests, oak-palm hammocks, and mangrove swamps, this barrier island park is a Gulf Coast paradise. Fishing, shelling, hiking and biking and nature trails. Accessible only by private boat or ferry. Overnight stays in primitive cabins are \$30 per night; and tent camping is \$18 per night. For ferry information and reservations visit [www.floridastateparks.org/cayocosta](http://www.floridastateparks.org/cayocosta).
7. Family dining without going broke: it can be done! Have the largest meal at lunch. Prices are less. Then go light on dinner. When looking for a restaurant, ask about special offers that might be available. When booking your hotel, select one that offers free breakfast. Make sure the room has a refrigerator for storing drinks and snacks!

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8. Chill out in one of the area's museums or science centers. Great value: The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum on Sanibel Island is the most comprehensive museum in the Western Hemisphere devoted solely to shells. It has been rated a "Gem" attraction by AAA and listed in "1,000 Places To See Before You Die." Admission is \$7 for adults 17 and older; \$4 for 5-16; children four and under are free. Visit [www.shellmuseum.org](http://www.shellmuseum.org).
9. Spend a cool day in one of the area's state parks. Great value: Lovers Key State Park, just south of Fort Myers Beach. The Travel Channel ranked this beautiful park fourth in the state of Florida. This is one of the area's most pristine parks. Walk the boardwalk over tidal lagoons to a sandy, white beach with sea oats. Hike the nature trail, paddle a lagoon. Visit [www.floridastateparks.org/loverskey](http://www.floridastateparks.org/loverskey).
10. Take a ride on the wild side at Babcock Wilderness Adventures. Great \$\$\$ value: Visitors experience the Telegraph Cypress Swamp and scenic woods on a 90-minute swamp buggy tour. View native wildlife, including panthers, alligators, deer, wild turkey, cattle and boars. Learn about native flora and fauna. Daily tours are available by reservation only. \$19.95 for adults; \$12.95 for children 3 to 12. Visit [www.babcockwilderness.com](http://www.babcockwilderness.com).

For details on planning a vacation at The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel and the best cost-saving deals, visit [www.FortMyersSanibel.com](http://www.FortMyersSanibel.com).

**Editors' Note:** *The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel include: Sanibel Island, Captiva Island, Fort Myers Beach, Fort Myers, Bonita Springs, Estero, Cape Coral, Pine Island, Boca Grande & outer islands, North Fort Myers, Lehigh Acres. Images available upon request.*