

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Islands FallFest 2009**

**The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel celebrates fall  
with annual events, great deals  
at Florida's unspoiled sanctuary**

LEE COUNTY, FL. – The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel on southwest Florida's Gulf Coast offers the destination's second annual Islands FallFest from Sept. 1 through Nov. 14, 2009. The promotion combines annual events and festivals with special rates and value added deals for visitors to Florida's unspoiled island sanctuary.

Fall is a great time to visit the area. It's less crowded. The weather is cooler. Sandcastles dot the beaches. Pirates are preparing for a cannon battle. Stone crab season begins Oct. 15. An "old Florida" community shows off its creative side. An eco festival and a paddling festival celebrate the area's natural resources. Visitors planning a vacation will find a complete listing of events and packages at [www.Islandsfallfest.com](http://www.Islandsfallfest.com).

Islands FallFest is a chance to discover, or rediscover, the area. The nearly 30 events spotlighted during the 75-day celebration appeal to a wide variety of interests. A sampling includes:

**The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Pirate Festival, Fort Myers Beach, Oct. 9-11.** Pirates reenact a ship to shore cannon battle and stage a parade. There's lots of food available. For information call 239-454-7500 or visit [www.fortmyersbeach.org](http://www.fortmyersbeach.org).

**The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Oktoberfest, Cape Coral, Oct. 16-18 and 23-25.** Enjoy this lively German tradition hosted by the German-American Club. The celebration of German culture, food, music and dancing includes authentic musical groups from Germany. For information call 239-283-1400 or visit [www.gasc-capecoral.com](http://www.gasc-capecoral.com).

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**The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual “Ding” Darling Days, Sanibel Island, Oct. 18-24.** The weeklong event at the J. N. “Ding” National Wildlife Refuge includes eco-activities with free refuge tram tours, live wildlife presentations, kid’s activities, Federal Duck Stamp artist presentation, and more. Birding and kayaking tours, environmental speakers, a nature photography contest, and Junior Duck Stamp Awards will fill the week with environmental activities for all ages. The festival celebrates the birthday of the refuge’s namesake, conservationist and Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist Jay N. "Ding" Darling. For information call 239-472-1100 or visit [www.dingdarlingdays.com](http://www.dingdarlingdays.com).

**The 4th Annual Calusa Blueway Paddling Festival, countywide, Oct. 23-Nov. 1.** Celebrate southwest Florida’s 190-mile marked paddling trail with nine days of eco-event festivities happening throughout the county. Along the Great Calusa Blueway paddling trail, events include free clinics and demonstrations, a speaker series, waterfront hospitality events and chances to win a kayak and other prizes. Also: moderately priced nature and cultural tours, waterway cleanups, canoe and kayak races, and a catch-and-release kayak fishing tournament. A nature photography contest and family-oriented outdoors eco-fests round out the offerings. For information visit [www.calusabluewaypaddlingfestival.com](http://www.calusabluewaypaddlingfestival.com).

**The 23rd Annual American Sandsculpting Championship Festival, Fort Myers Beach, Nov. 4-8.** For five days master and amateur sculptors migrate to Fort Myers Beach to erect unbelievable sand masterpieces. Warm Gulf waters and sugar fine white sand combine to create a canvas that artists harness to showcase their talents. The intricate sculptures take “playing in the sand” to a whole new level. Amateur sculptors are invited to create and learn from the masters during a Sandsculpting 101 workshop on Friday. For information call 239-454-7500 or visit [www.sandfestival.com](http://www.sandfestival.com).

**The 27th Annual Taste of the Town, Fort Myers, Nov. 1.** Sponsored by the Junior League of Fort Myers, this tasty event held downtown in Centennial Park features samplings from more than 40 local restaurants. The largest food and entertainment festival in southwest Florida with more than 15,000 people attending, it also includes live music, a rock climbing wall, giant slides and other children’s entertainment. For information call 239-277-1197 or visit [www.jlfm.org](http://www.jlfm.org).

**Florida’s Creative Coast Weekend, Pine Island, Nov. 13-15.** Step back into “old Florida.” Pine Island is home to artists, musicians and writers so it’s no wonder that the second weekend of each month is filled with artistic avenues to explore. Wander through unique art galleries, enjoy music, send a coconut postcard home. For information call 239-283-0888 or visit [www.floridascreativecoast.com](http://www.floridascreativecoast.com).

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Visitors planning a stay during Islands FallFest have choices of many packages and special rates including:

#### **'Tween Waters Inn, Captiva Island**

Book a three-night minimum, waterview guestroom, at a reduced rate of \$130 per night, plus free continental buffet. Available Sept. 2 - Nov. 20. Call 1-800-223-5865/239-472-5161 or visit [www.tween-waters.com](http://www.tween-waters.com).

#### **South Seas Island Resort, Captiva Island**

Stay two nights or longer and receive a \$50 Resort Credit. Also, buy one breakfast and get one free. Rates from \$149 per night. Available Oct. 1 through Dec. 24. Not available over Thanksgiving. Call 866-565-5089/239-472-5111 or visit [www.southseas.com](http://www.southseas.com).

#### **Island Inn, Sanibel Island**

"J. N. Ding Darling Days" package includes three nights Oct. 1- 31 for \$129 per night, single or double occupancy. The \$6 causeway toll is included. Draw a shell from the prize bowl for a chance to win stays at the inn. Complimentary coffee, donuts or croissants. Call 800-851-5088/239-472-1561 or visit [www.islandinnsanibel.com](http://www.islandinnsanibel.com).

#### **Holiday Inn Fort Myers Airport @ Town Center, Fort Myers**

Enjoy a "Holiday Shopping Experience!" Package includes deluxe accommodations, continental breakfast for two and a \$25 Gulf Coast Town Center shopping gift card. Rates: \$99 single, \$119 double (double occupancy receives two \$25 gift cards per room). Available Sept. 1 through Nov. 30 based on availability. Call 239-561-1550 or visit [www.hiftmyersairport.com](http://www.hiftmyersairport.com).

#### **Edison & Ford Winter Estates Vintage Vacation, Fort Myers**

Package includes two nights at the stylish boutique Hotel Indigo; two tickets to Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre; antique model T historic driving tour of downtown Fort Myers; two tour tickets to the Edison & Ford Winter Estates; two tour tickets to the Butterfly Estates. Rates: \$245 per person. Available through Dec. 7. For more information visit [www.efwefla.org](http://www.efwefla.org). For reservations, contact Hotel Indigo at 1-877-846-3446/239-337-3446 or visit [www.hotelindigo.com/fortmyers](http://www.hotelindigo.com/fortmyers).

#### **Pink Shell Beach Resort & Spa, Fort Myers Beach**

Couples Sailing Adventure package includes a two-night stay in a double occupancy studio with a beautiful view of the Gulf of Mexico; complimentary welcome drinks for two; breakfast for two daily; two-hour sailing adventure with an Offshore Sailing School instructor; Steve Colgate's basic sailing book. Rates begin at \$573. Available Aug. 8-Dec. 24. For reservations call the resort at 866-976-6692/239-463-6181 or visit

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[www.pinkshell.com](http://www.pinkshell.com). Reserve sailing adventure with Offshore Sailing 48 hours prior to arrival by calling 800-221-4326 or visit [www.offshoresailing.com](http://www.offshoresailing.com).

For information on planning a vacation to The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel during Islands FallFest, visit [www.IslandsFallFest.com](http://www.IslandsFallFest.com) for complete details on all events, vacation packages and special deals or call (800) 237-6444.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel in southwest Florida includes: 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.*