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The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel plans *Summer Sanctuary* program to spotlight attractions, best deals May-August

LEE COUNTY, FL – The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel on southwest Florida’s Gulf Coast will launch its second *Summer Sanctuary* program filled with the best deals and rates to entice summer visitation to the destination May through August 2010.

During these months, the unspoiled island sanctuary is spotlighting its unique attractions and accommodations with exceptional vacation packages, rates and value-added amenities for consumers to enjoy.

“Summer is one of the best times of year to visit our destination because travelers can live like a local, enjoy a laid-back lifestyle and take advantage of the best values that our accommodations and attractions offer,” said Tamara Pigott, interim executive director of the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau, which markets the destination for leisure and group business. “We have fewer crowds, shorter lines and a chance for visitors to leisurely enjoy our beaches, nature and breathtaking sunsets.”

Visitors vacationing during *Summer Sanctuary* enjoy soaking up the sun on more than 50 miles of white sand beaches; exploring some of the world’s best shelling beaches featuring more than 400 species; hopping a cruise or water taxi and marveling at bottlenose dolphins and manatees in the wild; learning about ecosystems at a sea school; surrounding themselves with butterflies; witnessing a sea turtle release by the local conservation organization Turtle Time; island hopping among the area’s barrier islands; catching a snook, tarpon or redfish while fishing off piers, bridges or beaches; meandering through quaint art galleries; and watching the sun set from island locations.

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In addition, summer visitors discover some of the area's unique attractions by learning to sail at Colgate's Offshore Sailing School; exploring history at the Edison & Ford Winter Estates; viewing migratory birds and other wildlife at the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge, the largest undeveloped mangrove ecosystems in the United States; visiting the Sanibel Lighthouse and the Boca Grande Lighthouse, true area landmarks; getting close to nature on the 190-mile Great Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail; and soaking in the breathtaking beauty of Lovers Key State Park.

Visitors to The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel may take advantage of *Summer Sanctuary* vacation packages at more than 20 participating properties. Offers start at \$99 per night and include such perks as local attraction tickets, shopping gift cards, spa treatments, beach gear, and meals. Some restrictions apply.

To plan a vacation at The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel to enjoy its *Summer Sanctuary*, visit www.FortMyers-Sanibel.com for complete details on all featured attractions, adventures, and vacation packages, 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.*