



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel sparkles with holiday fun, entertainment, luminary trails, historic homes

LEE COUNTY, FL – It's never too early to begin planning for a Christmas vacation and the holiday season is one of the most beautiful times to visit The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel in Southwest Florida. This year, visitors have many opportunities to celebrate with traditional events that include the 44rd Annual Holiday Nights at the Edison & Ford Winter Estates in Fort Myers and the 34th Annual Luminary Trail on Sanibel and Captiva islands. Two of the area's historic, turn-of-the-century homes will be open for holiday tours. Tree lightings, boat parades and holiday shows all make the area a favorite for holiday gatherings.

43rd Annual Holiday Nights at the Edison & Ford Winter Estates, Fort Myers November 23 through December 30, 2018 (Event closed Dec. 24 and 25)

239-334-7419

www.edisonfordwinterestates.org

Edison Ford Holiday Nights reflect the many contributions of Thomas Edison, Henry Ford and their families to the local community. It was chosen by the editors of *USA Today* as one of the *10 Best Historic Homes for the Holidays*, which also included The White House, Mount Vernon, Monticello and the Biltmore in North Carolina. To view the article visit:

www.10best.com/interests/trip-pics/historic-homes-for-the-holidays/.

In addition, The American Bus Association (ABA) designated the event as one of the *Top 100 Events in North America for 2016*. Edison Ford Holiday Nights has also been featured in *Destinations* magazine noting that Edison Ford Holiday Nights offers excellent entertainment value to both tour groups and individual travelers from around the world.

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A not-to-be-missed holiday tradition, the historic buildings and more than 20 acres of gardens are decorated with lights and traditional decorations. The event offers a special holiday tour, Children's Tree Trail, Santa visits on select nights, refreshments and shopping in the Ford Cottage Shoppe, Museum Store and Garden Shoppe. For admission and details:

www.edisonfordwinterstates.org/events/annual-events/holiday-nights/

34th Annual Christmas Luminary Trail and Open House, Sanibel and Captiva islands December 7 on Sanibel Island and December 8 on Captiva Island 2018.

www.sanibel-captiva.org

This event draws visitors from all over the world as they join local residents to celebrate the season with three miles of luminary candles and events.

Annual Port Boca Grande Lighthouse and Museum Lighting, Boca Grande December 8, 2018

www.barrierislandparkssociety.org/events

Celebrate the annual lighting of the Gasparilla Lighthouse at 6 p.m. with music and refreshments. Gates open at 5:30 p.m.

Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre, Fort Myers November-December 2018

www.BroadwayPalm.com

239-278-4422

Celebrating its 25th season in southwest Florida, Broadway Palm offers an exciting holiday lineup that includes *Elf the Musical* in the main theater Nov. 22-Dec. 25. In addition, Off Broadway Palm presents *Winter Wonderettes* Nov. 15-25 and the Children's Theatre features *The Nutcracker* Nov. 30-Dec. 24. Call or visit website for detailed schedule and prices.

30th Annual Fort Myers Beach Christmas Boat Parade Dec. 1, 2018

www.fortmyersbeach.org

239-474-7500

Enjoy some Christmas spirit from 6-8 p.m. The parade passes establishments including Bootleggers Waterfront Barbeque, Parrot Key Caribbean Grill, Matanzas on the Bay, Nervous Nellies, Doc Fords and Bonita Bills where you can kick back and enjoy the fun. This event is presented by the Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce.

Annual Bonita Springs Christmas Boat Parade Dec. 8, 2018

www.bonitaboatparade.com

239-495-0455

Parade kicks off at 6 p.m. from BayWater Boat Club and Rentals. Visit website for a route map.

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The Southwest Florida Symphony Holiday Pops Concerts, 2018, Fort Myers and Bonita Springs

www.swflso.org/concerts

239-418-1500

Christmas in Paradise concerts will be presented Dec. 7 at Shell Point Village Church in Fort Myers; Dec. 6 at First Presbyterian Church in Bonita Springs; Dec. 8 at Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall in Fort Myers. Call for ticket information.

Cape Coral Christmas Boat Parade

Dec. 15, 2018

www.come-to-cape-coral.com/christmas-boat-parade.html

Enjoy food, music and a visit from Santa during this boat parade and festival from 4-10 p.m. in Four Freedoms Park. Boat parade begins at 7 p.m.

Gasparilla Inn & Club, Boca Grande, celebrates "Twelve Days of Christmas"

Dec. 20-31, 2018

941-964-4500

www.the-gasparilla-inn.com

The height of the "Social Season" begins in late December, just in time for the launch of the Twelve Days of Christmas. With a new theme to each day, special activities spark holiday magic for the entire family through the New Year. Festive decorations, cheerful caroling, classic holiday movies and gingerbread house decorating are just a few of the events offered during the Twelve Days of Christmas celebration at The Inn.

Check website for details.

2018 Holidays in the Downtown Fort Myers River District

River District Holidays, downtown Fort Myers

Dec 1, 2018-Jan. 2, 2019

www.fortmyersriverdistrictalliance.com/holidays

The calendar is packed with holiday events to get you in the spirit of the season. Festival of Trees, Holiday Stroll and Tree Lighting, Burroughs's Home & Gardens Holiday House, Music Walk a New Year's Eve celebration to welcome 2019 and more. Check the website for a complete calendar. For details of each day's events, visit

www.fortmyersriverdistrictalliance.com/holidays/ for all holiday events including:

November 23: Jingle & Jazz Music Walk, downtown Fort Myers, 6-10 p.m.

Nov. 27-Dec. 2: Festival of Trees, Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center. www.goodwilltrees.com for times.

December 7: Lighting of the tree and Holiday Art Walk, downtown Fort Myers, 6-10 p.m.

December 14: Holiday Mystery Walk, downtown Fort Myers, 6-8 p.m.

December 21: Rockin' Holidays Music Walk, downtown Fort Myers, 6-10 p.m.

December 31 Downtown Countdown NYE Celebration, downtown Fort Myers, 6 p.m.-1 a.m.

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62nd Holiday House

Decorated Historic Homes, downtown Fort Myers

Dec. 7-22, 2018

239-337-0706

www.BurroughsHome.com

Thousands of lights decorate the historic Burroughs Home and Langford Kingston Home in historic downtown Fort Myers. Check [here](#) for details. 5-9 p.m. nightly.

2018 Holidays on the Seminole Gulf Railway, Fort Myers

www.semgulf.com

239-275-8487

Set sail for a holiday light extravaganza Dec. 10-11 and 17-18 on the Seminole Gulf Railway. Enjoy soup and salad going north to Punta Gorda for a boat tour through Punta Gorda Isles and entree and dessert on the journey back to Fort Myers. Holiday-themed murder mystery show takes place on Dec. 24 and New Year's Eve Gala on Dec. 31, 2018. Call for details and reservations.

Santa's Dolphin & Wildlife Cruise, Port Sanibel Marina, Fort Myers

Dec. 24, 2018

239-472-8443

www.adventureinparadiseinc.com/cruises/santa-christmas-cruise/

Cruise out to meet Santa who is waiting with presents for the kids before he makes his journey later that evening. Have photos taken. Call for details and reservations.

Fort Myers Beach New Year's Eve and Town Birthday Celebration

Dec. 31, 2018

www.fortmyersbeach.org

Come celebrate the birthday of the Town of Fort Myers Beach and New Year's Eve at Times Square. Festivities begin with free cupcakes starting between noon and 1pm. Live music will be played throughout the day. Ball drop is at midnight with fireworks immediately afterwards.

For more information on special holiday events and packages or for planning a holiday vacation to The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel, visit www.FortMyers-Sanibel.com.

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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. For media assistance please visit www.fortmyerssanibel.com/media.*