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A Beachcomber's Guide

Find treasures from the sea



Florida Fashion, Local Eats and **Events Calendar**





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Coastal Eats

By Amy Nance

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We've reeled in the best Florida seafood coast to coast, served everywhere from dockside fishing villages to seafood shacks, or plated at romantic restaurants with water views. Take your pick.

Market Fresh

At the Star Fish Company Market & Restaurant in Cortez, a historic fishing village, you'll find fresh seafood proudly displayed in ice cases. This hole-in-the-wall spot is best known for its fresh-caught grouper, snapper and mullet (don't miss the best seller—grouper tacos served on the dock out back). Local favorite Walt's Fish Market in Sarasota has been serving up everything from mangrove snapper to Florida oysters for a century. Order one of the dinner specials, then chill in the tiki bar. At Captain Jim's Seafood Market Restaurant in Miami, it's all about the stone crabs. The fresh fish counter is stocked with delicacies, while the menu features conch chowder and yellowtail snapper.

Catch These Specialties

For local specialties done right, try Fresh Catch Bistro Beach in Fort Myers Beach, where fans rave about the pecan-crusted grouper. If it's sweet Key West shrimp you're after, head to charming Hogfish Grill in Key West. Get them steeped in grits, stuffed in a taco, or peel-and-eat style. After a beach day in Destin, visit The Back Porch Seafood and Oyster House for both a festive atmosphere and for the signature chargrilled amberjack.

Celebratory Seafood

Reserve a night for a special seafood dinner, no matter where you are in the Sunshine State. Instagram your plate at Tallahassee's Saltwater Seafood Company, where oysters and other Apalachicola Bay specialties top the menu. Enjoy a margarita and grilled mahi while overlooking the Halifax River at popular DJ's Deck in Port Orange, or nosh on Southern-style seafood-including a selection of "naked fish"-in an Old Floridastyle cottage at Owen's Fish Camp in Sarasota. In Naples, moor up at Swan River Seafood Restaurant & Market for fresh clams and oysters.

Shack Up

Keep it simple at these rustic shacks and camps. To the north, Schooners helps Panama City Beach stay well-fed and entertained with a weekend brunch, live music and a heaping seafood platter. In New Smyrna Beach, catch your dinner and JB's Fish Camp will cook it for you. There's nothing fancy about Ted Peters Famous Smoked Fish in St. Petersburg, but the smoked fish dinner is out of this world. And from the quirky, maritime-themed entrance to the scrumptious clams they serve up inside, DJ's Clam Shack in Key West gives you a taste of Florida's seafood done Key West-style.**

Clockwise: Star Fish Company Market & Restaurant, Cortez; Schooners, Panama City Beach; Saltwater Seafood Company, Tallahassee



To find Florida's top food festivals and events, see page 60.

Sampling Homegrown Florida

By Sarah Walch

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Joe's Stone Crab, Miami Beach

Taste Florida's homegrown favorites hailing fresh from the sea or grown from a seed.

Fruits of the Sea

One of Florida's delicacies, the stone crab claw, is in season from October 15 to May 15. Indulge at restaurants across the state, such as Joe's Stone Crab in Miami Beach, a foodie favorite since 1921. At Red Fish Blue Fish in Pensacola Beach, guests dine on locally sourced seafood on tables near the sand, then enjoy a fire pit at sunset. In Cedar Key, the national award-winning clam chowder at Tony's World Champion Clam Chowder also draws attention.

Food Festivals

Plan your visit around one of the state's food festivals specializing in everything from kumquats and sweet corn, to spiny lobster and blue crab. A favorite is Key West's Key Lime Festival, running June 30-July 4, 2018.

Farmers' Markets

Florida's farmers' markets are an ideal way to peruse local produce. Experience St. Petersburg's Saturday Morning Market in season, one of the largest in the Southeast.

Produce Picking

Prefer to pick your own produce? Try quaint Hilltop Groves near Ocala to self-pick citrus in season. While you're there, take a peek at the grove's packing house.**