



AllWays Traveller

Tallahassee, Florida, USA

www.allwaystraveller.com

A treat at the top of the sunshine state

Tallahassee, is located in the Red Hills region of the Florida Panhandle.

Situated at the top of the 'Sunshine State' it lies some 25 miles from the Gulf of Mexico and is surrounded by genuine natural beauty.

Being Florida, there is a climate that allows year-round enjoyment of the areas outdoor pursuits.

As Florida State Capital, Tallahassee also enjoys a political edge and historic ambiance supported by a fine cultural offering and cosmopolitan infrastructure.

The Florida State and Florida A&M Universities are both based here and these infuse the city with the youthful vibrancy of a college town.

While Florida is one of the world's major tourist hot spots, Tallahassee is yet to be recognised as a travel destination in its own right.

A treat at the top of the state awaits.

Ashley Gibbins

The International Travel Writers Alliance
www.itwalliance.com

Downtown Tallahassee

Downtown Tallahassee, and its emerging mid-town area, is clean, well laid out and attractive with main thoroughfares dominated by the majestic live oaks festooned with Spanish moss.



www.visittallahassee.com



Now's the time to try Tallahassee

by Ashley Gibbins



For a few short weeks in November 2000 Tallahassee sat plumb at the centre of global attention.

The world's media invaded the city to enable the rest of us to witness from afar the fascinating and, dare I say farcical, culmination to the US Presidential elections.

The result of the Florida poll saw Republican candidate George W Bush secure a slither slim victory over the then Vice-President Al Gore.



Bush won by just 900 hotly contested votes after a recount and the rest, as they say, is history.

And when the final hanging, dimpled and pregnant chad had been counted and the last outside broadcast vehicle had pulled out of town, Tallahassee settled back into gentle and relative obscurity.

Few the many millions who visit Florida each year even know the state capital is Tallahassee - let alone choose to visit.

Located where Florida abuts Alabama and Georgia - and being nearer to Atlanta and New Orleans than Miami – Tallahassee is maybe just a little too far removed from Orlando or Miami.

While this, in itself, makes Tallahassee an intriguing prospect for the travel journalist it will also reward a visit by the independent traveller.

Downtown Tallahassee

Tallahassee combines capital city buzz with small town ambience. It has all one could expect by way of events, entertainment, attractions and dining opportunities.

This and the fine natural light means the city has long been a magnet for artists whose work can be seen in the museums or bought at the many art galleries operating here.

As State Capital, Tallahassee attracts the world's best classical and popular music performers.

Live music is also heard in many of the bars and fine city restaurants and visitors can enjoy this and theatre performances by the students.

www.tallahasseedowntown.com

Around the city



Tallahassee's location, in the Red Hills bio-region of the Florida Panhandle, also makes this one of the US's most biologically-diverse regions.

Within an easy drive from the refined, sophisticated heart of the city, one can be in a different world.

This may be walking through the Apalachicola National Forest, watching Florida manatee, alligators and cormorants at Wakulla Springs or strolling the beaches and small coastal towns of the Gulf of Mexico.

Edward Ball Wakulla Springs



The Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park, which encompasses one of the world's largest and deepest freshwater springs, is a delightful day out.

The Springs are home to a wonderful array of wildlife, including the West Indian (aka Florida) Manatee, alligators, turtles and deer and provide a natural aviary for many dozens of species of birds.

The guided riverboat tours gives visitors a fascinating close up look at the wildlife and there is a 'swimming hole' with a good chance of a manatee or two joining you in the water.

A nature trail offers a leisurely walk along the upland wooded areas of the state park.

www.floridastateparks.org/wakullasprings

Apalachicola National Forest

For those who enjoy more rugged beauty the Apalachicola National Forest, at 564,961 acres, is the largest forested area in Florida and a true wilderness on the Tallahassee doorstep.



The Forest offers bike and horseback riding and water-based recreation such as boating and fishing along the Ochlockonee and Apalachicola Rivers.

For those seeking peace and quiet there are 85 miles of designated hiking trails including the Florida National Scenic Trail, which offers some of the most remote hiking areas available in Florida.

www.stateparks.com/apalachicola.html

Canopy roads



Even getting around is a pleasure.

Tallahassee's nine designated 'canopy roads', originally old Indian trails and now lined with huge, moss-draped live oaks provide 78 miles of truly scenic drives throughout the area.

Mission San Luis



Like Tallahassee itself, the Mission San Luis is a 'hidden gem', which recreates a community where Apalachee Indians and first Spanish settlers lived together.

The mission brings 'history to life' with visitors given tours of the council house, the home of the Spanish deputy governor, the settlements Franciscan church and the fort that protected the community.

The lushly landscaped grounds of the mission reward a visit in their own right.

The Museum of Florida History

The Museum of Florida History provides a fascinating collection that interprets past and present cultures in Florida and promotes knowledge and appreciation of this heritage.

As the state history museum, it focuses on the way Floridians have influenced national and global events.

www.museumoffloridahistory.com

AllWays more Tallahassee

When to go to Tallahassee

Tallahassee is a four season destination with spring and autumn particularly fine weather-wise.

This being Florida, the summer months can be very hot and humid.

Sitting of government

Tallahassee is a political buzz for ten weeks each spring when Florida senators and their entourage decamp to the city for the legislative session.

College football



On seven weekends between September and November Florida State 'Seminoles' fans and their opponents take over Tallahassee.

What follows is a three-day carnival of marching bands, picnics and general good natured cavorting.

How to get to there

By air

The main US international hubs all provide links to Tallahassee regional airport.

By car

Four major highways (I-10, US 27, US 319 and US 90) will get you into Tallahassee.

Where to stay

With visitors flocking to the city for the Spring time sitting of the State government and during college football weekends mean Tallahassee has an abundance of accommodation outside these times.

Tallahassee Capital Courtyard

The Tallahassee Capital Courtyard, is among the most popular mid-range hotels in Tallahassee. Situated close to downtown it offers an excellent touring base for the area.

www.marriott.com

When and where to eat

There is no shortage of dining in Tallahassee with regional and American cuisine competing for choice with fine dining and international fare.

The city's proximity to the Gulf of Mexico makes fresh seafood a good option.

For two contrasting choices :

Miller's Ale House

This authentic American bar has great beer, great food and great prices, wall to wall sports TV and a real buzz.

www.millersalehouse.com

Avenue Eat & Drink



Avenue Eat and Drink is a fine downtown restaurant with a menu with influences from Florida, South Carolina, Louisiana and Georgia.

www.avenueeatanddrink.com

A guided tour

Beth Lacivita provides really enjoyable guided driving and walking sight-seeing tours of Florida's Capital, the canopy roads and the nearby coastline.

www.toursintallahassee.com

The International Travel Writers Alliance



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www.allwaystraveller.com

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The International Travel Writers Alliance

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The International Travel Writers Alliance is the worlds largest association of professional travel journalists.

Ashley Gibbins



Ashley Gibbins, a third generation journalist, is Chief Executive of the International Travel Writers Alliance.