



ORLANDO – DID YOU KNOW?

Attractions

- **Wet 'n Wild - Orlando** was the world's first water park, opening in 1977. It remains one of America's only water parks to be open year-round.
- **Fun Spot USA** in Kissimmee boasts the world's tallest SkyCoaster at 300 feet tall (91 meters).
- **Dinosaur World** in nearby Plant City was named among the "Top 10 Quirkiest Interstate Attractions" by the Society of American Travel Writers. The attraction marks its entrance with a 50-foot (15-meter) T-Rex on the side of I-4.
- The **Kennedy Space Center's** Vehicle Assembly Building is the largest building in the world in terms of internal volume. Its ceiling is so high (at 525 feet/160 meters) that rain clouds can form inside the structure.
- **Aiguille Rock Climbing Center** is one of the largest centers in the East Coast with 6,500 square feet (604 square meters) of climbing and over 1,000 square feet (93 square meters) of bouldering.
- **Boggy Creek Airboat Rides** has the world's largest fleet of U.S. Coast Guard approved airboats.
- **Orlando Brewing** is the only organic brewery in the Southeast and one of only 10 in the United States
- **Cirque du Soleil's "La Nouba"** is performed 10 times each week in a custom-built theater at Downtown Disney's West Side. There are 1,730 audio cables running through the theatre. If placed end-to-end, they would stretch 164 miles (264 kilometers) or roughly the distance from Orlando to Tampa and back again.
- **Harry P. Leu Gardens** is home to the largest documented camellia collection in eastern North America, featuring more than 2,000 specimens.
- **The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art** houses the most comprehensive collection of Tiffany glass in the world.
- **Pirate's Dinner Adventure** is set on an authentic replica of an 18th century Spanish galleon with a 40-foot (12-meter) mast anchored in a 300,000 gallon (1.1 million liters) indoor lagoon. With more than 100 guests of all ages invited to don costumes and play a part in the evening's adventure, the attraction is widely known as "The World's Most Interactive Dinner Show."

- The Palace of Horses at **Arabian Nights** is the world's largest indoor, climate-controlled equestrian arena for a permanent show. It's the perfect venue for the show's cast of 60 horses, valued at more than \$5 million.
- The **World's Largest Hard Rock Café** is in Orlando and boasts more pieces of rock 'n' roll memorabilia than any other location, including Beatles bricks from The Cavern Club and the doors from Abbey Road Studios.
- Orlando is home to the first **Waldorf Astoria** to be built outside of New York City.
- **Nickelodeon Suites Resort** uses 150,000 gallons (567,812 liters) of slime and 10,000 whip cream pies a year.
- The earth's largest Marriott, the 2,000-room **Orlando World Center Marriott Resort and Convention Center**, features the largest pillar-free resort ballroom in the nation and event space totaling 450,000 square feet (41,000 square meters).
- **The Renaissance Orlando at SeaWorld** contains the largest media wall in Orlando, featuring 16 wide-screen televisions and nearly 21 million pixels of high definition video footage playing underwater images of colorful soft corals and exotic marine life from the Banda Sea off the Indonesian coast.

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment

- Most families couldn't afford **SeaWorld Orlando's** grocery bill. Shamu eats approximately 220 pounds (99 kilograms) of food each day – that's about 46 times more than the average American human.
- The dolphin lagoons at **Discovery Cove** hold 3 million gallons (11.3 million liters) of water – enough water to fill four Olympic-size swimming pools.
- **SeaWorld Orlando's** Manta roller coaster's first drop provides all the power the flying coaster needs to speed for the next 3,000-plus feet (900-meter), even through multiple loops, inversions and twists.

Universal Orlando Resort

- Since the grand opening celebration, more than seven million guests have experienced **Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey** and more than two million Butterbeers have been sold at **The Wizarding World of Harry Potter** at Universal's Islands of Adventure. The Hogwarts Express train located at the front of Hogsmeade is an exact replica of the one from the Harry Potter films. **The Wizarding World of Harry Potter**, which is expanded in the coming years to bring even more of the wizarding world to life, is also the only place guests can see the Hogwarts Founders; they have not appeared in any of the Harry Potter films.

- **Hollywood Rip Ride Rockit at Universal Studios Florida** is the country's only roller coaster where guests can choose the soundtrack to their ride from songs representing five different genres of music and features three world's-first maneuvers – the Double Take (world's largest non-inverted loop), the Treble Clef (track bent into the shape of a treble clef music symbol) and the Jump Cut (a spiraling negative-gravity move).
- There are 24 instantly recognizable Springfield characters – all voiced by the original actors – that appear in **The Simpsons Ride at Universal Studios Florida**.
- Many of the structures and facades in **Universal Studios Florida** are modeled after sets from famous movies and television shows, including "Pretty Woman," "The Godfather" and "The Cosby Show."
- The **Blue Man Group** show at Universal CityWalk uses the equivalent of 56,000 rolls of paper during the show. Do not worry, they recycle.
- Seuss Landing at **Universal's Islands of Adventure** is so true to the works of the famed children's author that you won't find a single straight line – even the trees are crooked.
- The unique booster thrust system that propels riders upward 150 feet (46 meters) in three seconds on the **Incredible Hulk Coaster at Universal's Islands of Adventure** utilizes 45,000 pounds (20,412 kilograms) of thrust for two seconds – enough power to launch a bowling ball all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

Walt Disney World Resort

- If you wanted to stay in all the guest rooms in all of the hotels and resorts currently open on **Walt Disney World Resort** property (at a rate of one per night) it would take decades. There are more than 25,000 Disney-owned/operated guest rooms.
- Each year the horticulture staff at **Walt Disney World Resort** plants 3 million bedding plants and annuals and maintains millions of other plants including more than 4 million shrubs, 13,000 roses and more than 200 topiaries.
- **Walt Disney World Resort** is quite literally its own city, covering 39-square miles (101-square kilometers), that could fit the island of Manhattan in it twice – or the entire city of San Francisco.
- There are enough of the famous Mickey Mouse ears sold each year at **Walt Disney World Resort** to cover the head of every man, woman and child in Orange County, Fla. and enough Disney character T-shirts to put Mickey Mouse's smiling face on the chest of every resident of Montana.
- "Mickey's PhilharMagic" at the **Magic Kingdom** features one of the largest seamless projection screens in the world, measuring 150 feet (46 meters) long and 28 feet (8.5 meters) high. The show also features the largest cast of classic Disney animated stars who have ever performed together in a single 3-D show.

- There are approximately 62,000 Cast Members who create the magic at **Walt Disney World Resort**, the largest single-site employer in the United States.
- More than 30 tons of fruits and vegetables grown at The Land pavilion at **Epcot** are served in Walt Disney World restaurants.
- **Disney's Animal Kingdom**, Disney's largest theme park, encompasses 403 acres (163 hectares). The park's centerpiece is the 14-stories high and 50-feet (15-meters) wide Tree of Life.

Famous Faces

- Orlando is a hot spot for celebrity chefs. One of the first to open a restaurant in Orlando was **Wolfgang Puck** with the Wolfgang Puck Cafe at Downtown Disney. TV personality and cookbook author **Emeril Lagasse** owns two Orlando restaurants, Emeril's Orlando at Universal CityWalk and Emeril's Tchoup Chop at Loews Royal Pacific at Universal Orlando. At The Ritz-Carlton Orlando, Grande Lakes, chef and cookbook author **Norman Van Aken** debuted his second Florida restaurant, Norman's. **Todd English** opened bluezoo at the Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin and **Roy Yamaguchi** opened Roy's Restaurant. Celebrity Chef, **Cat Cora**, the first and only female Iron Chef on the Food Network series *Iron Chef America*, opened Kouzzina by Cat Cora at Disney's BoardWalk at Walt Disney World Resort.
- Orlando is home to restaurants owned by favorite film, music and sports celebrities. At Downtown Disney West Side, **Gloria and Emilio Estefan** are behind Bongo's Cuban Café. **B.B. King** frequently visits his restaurant, B.B. King's Blues Club, at Pointe Orlando. At Universal's CityWalk, diners get a surprise when the owner makes an appearance at **Jimmy Buffett's** Margaritaville.
- The wide variety of landscapes available across the Orlando area has **provided the backdrop for notable movies** such as *The Waterboy*, *Bring It On 4* and *Monster*. **Television programs** that filmed episodes in Orlando include *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, MTV's *Making the Band* and *Little People, Big World*.
- Approximately 60 **national commercials** are shot in the region every year featuring well-known names like Best Buy, Nike, Kodak and Pepsi.
- Acclaimed acts like **Rascal Flatts**, **Kenny Chesney**, **Dave Matthews Band**, **Creed** and **Shania Twain** shot music videos in Orlando.
- Many of today's most famous pop icons got their start in Orlando's entertainment industry. **Britney Spears**, **Christina Aguilera** and **Justin Timberlake** all first earned their ears on Disney Channel's "The New Mickey Mouse Club," filmed on location at Disney's Hollywood Studios. Former N'SYNC members **Joey Fatone** and **JC Chasez** used to work at Universal Orlando Resort.

- What do singers **Mandy Moore, Rob Thomas and Luis Fonsi** have in common? They were all raised in the Orlando area. Former Creed front man **Scott Stapp** and the Backstreet Boys' **Howie Dorough** were born here.
- Orlando is the hometown of many famous faces, including **Delta Burke** of "Designing Women" fame and **Candice Accola**, one of the stars of the popular TV show "The Vampire Diaries."
- Famous author, **Jack Kerouac**, lived in Orlando and wrote one of his most important works, "The Dharma Bums," in a small tin-roofed house near downtown. This house serves as a Writer in Residence Project, which brings emerging authors to live and work in the home for three-month stints.
- Dozens of today's favorite celebrities, including **Chris Brown, Alicia Keys**, Orlando Magic's **Jameer Nelson, Grant Hill** and **Justin Bieber** have been seen enjoying the unique shopping experience at The Mall at Millenia. E! personality **George Kotsiopolous** also hosted the mall's 2011 Fashion Week.
- Orlando native **Wayne Brady**, the Emmy award-winning comic who starred in the American version of "Whose Line is it Anyway?", honed his improvisational comedy skills on the stage of SAK Comedy Lab, a popular comedy club in downtown Orlando. Comic **Billy Gardell**, known for his role on the "Mike & Molly" TV show on CBS, attended Winter Park High School and started his career at a local comedy club.
- Game show "Family Feud," hosted by **Steve Harvey**, tapes at Universal Orlando Resort.
- The name of Orlando-area resident Daniel Lawrence Whitney probably doesn't ring a bell ... you might know him as **Larry the Cable Guy**. When not performing as part of the Blue Collar Comedy Tour, he is at home in Sanford – just minutes north of downtown Orlando.
- Orlando is a golfer's paradise so it's not surprising that several top PGA and LPGA Tour players call the area home. Orlando's top golfers include **Arnold Palmer, Tiger Woods, Ernie Els, Sergio Garcia, Retief Goosen, Lee Janzen, Mark O'Meara, Chris DiMarco, Se Ri Pak** and **Annika Sörenstam** among others.
- Orlando is home to two colleges that have produced some famous alumni. **Buddy Ebsen** of "The Beverly Hillbillies," **Fred Rogers** of "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood," **Anthony Perkins** of "Psycho" fame and **Prince Lorenzo Borghese** of reality show "The Bachelor: Rome" graduated from Rollins College. Actress **Cheryl Hines** of "Suburgatory" graduated from the University of Central Florida.
- Orlando-area schools also produced many of today's top athletes. Professional soccer player **Michelle Akers** graduated from the University of Central Florida. Major League Baseball's **Johnny Damon** of the Tampa Bay Rays and **Warren Sapp**, now retired from the NFL, also grew up in Orlando and went to school here. World Series 2006 MVP **David Eckstein** was born in nearby Sanford and still

maintains a home there. While the NBA's **Marquis Daniels** of the Boston Celtics was born in Orlando, several NBA stars – and former Orlando Magic players – including **Shaquille O'Neal** of the Boston Celtics and **Tracy McGrady** of the Atlanta Hawks maintain residences in the city.

- Other famous Orlando sports figures...former Light Heavyweight boxing champion **Antonio "the Magic Man" Tarver** is from Orlando and was the first boxer to defeat Roy Jones Jr. in the ring. **Amare Stoudemire**, NBA player for the New York Knicks, and **Max Starks**, offensive lineman for the Pittsburgh Steelers, used to be Orlando Magic ball boys. **Doc Rivers**, Boston Celtics' head coach, lives in Winter Park. Boston Red Sox catcher, **Jason Varitek**, was born and raised in Central Florida and graduated from Lake Brantley High School. **Zach Greinke**, the sixth pick in the 2002 Major League Baseball draft, hails from Apopka and plays for the Milwaukee Brewers.

Tourism Treasures

- In 2010, **Orlando** became the first destination in the country to welcome more than 50 million visitors, ranking No. 1 as most visited U.S. destination with 51.45 million visitors.
- Tourism in Orlando generated \$28.3 billion in spending in 2010 and accounted for 216,018 direct industry jobs, 24.4% of total private employment in the three-county Orlando area (Orange, Osceola and Seminole).
- Orlando has been consistently chosen as the **top Family Spring Break destination** for American families.
- It would take guests about **67 eight-hour days** to visit Orlando's more than 100 awesome attractions and almost five years to eat in Orlando's nearly **5,000 restaurants** eating at three each day.
- It would take 900 American football fields laid side-by-side and end-to-end to completely fill the **52 million square feet (4.6 million square meters) of retail shopping** space in Orlando.
- Orlando's **176 public and semi-private golf courses** combined equal more than 545 miles (877 kilometers) of golf fun.
- **Welcome to Jernigan:** Orlando's history can be traced back to 1838, when the United States Army built Fort Gatlin in an effort to prevent Indian attacks on area settlers. The area was known as "Jernigan," (after cattle farmer Aaron Jernigan, who helped establish the areas first trading post) until 1856, when it was changed to "Orlando."
- The **University of Central Florida** in Orlando boasts more than 58,000 students, making it America's second largest university. *U.S. News & World Report's* "America's Best Colleges" guide has named UCF as a top 10 national university to watch for the past two years.

- The **University of Central Florida's College of Medicine** is the centerpiece of a rapidly developing "medical city" that is transforming the region's economy. Located at Lake Nona, near Orlando International Airport, the "medical city" also features the **Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute** and **MD Anderson Cancer Center Orlando**. **Nemours Children's Hospital**, the **Orlando VA Medical Center** and a **University of Florida research facility** are under construction.
- **Rollins College** in Winter Park is Florida's oldest college and has been chosen as the top regional university in the South by *US News & World Report*.
- The names of some of the approach procedures that all aircrafts follow into their arrival at **Orlando International Airport** are named CWRLD ONE, COSTR ONE, PIGLT ONE, MINEE TWO and GOOFY FIVE.
- The **Orange County Convention Center (OCCC)** installed a one-megawatt rooftop solar photovoltaic (PV) system. Utilizing high efficiency flat-plate collectors and occupying approximately 200,000 square feet (60,960 square meters) of roof space on the North/South Building, it is the largest PV system in the southeastern United States.
- If the 1,450-foot-tall (441-meter-tall) Willis Tower in Chicago was placed on its side, it would fit lengthwise inside the **Orange County Convention Center's** exhibition space – and that includes the antenna atop the Windy City icon.
- It took 270,181,975 pounds (122,552,500 kilograms) of concrete to build the new **Amway Center**, which now features 20,000 seats and 1,100 high-definition video displays.
- Electronic Arts, the world's leading independent developer and publisher of interactive entertainment software, creates some of the world's top selling products at facilities in metro Orlando, including the **popular Madden Football video game** series.
- Not only is the **Orange County Regional History Center** a history museum located inside a 1927 historic building, but the original Courtroom B was the scene of the first case in which DNA was used.
- **Bok Tower Gardens** is located on peninsular Florida's highest point – 298 feet (91 meters) above sea level. The sanctuary's carillon includes 60 bells, the largest of which is roughly the weight of eight cars stacked on top of each other.
- Central Florida is home to "**The Senator**" – the oldest and largest bald cypress tree in the world standing more than 138 feet (42 meters) high with a diameter of 17.5 feet (5.3 meters) at Big Tree Park.
- The area between Osceola and Polk Counties has the **largest population of bald eagles** in the Continental United States.

- There are **nine species of swans** and they can all be found at Downtown's Lake Eola.
- **The St. Johns River**, 310 miles (499 kilometers) in length, is the longest river in Florida. Among its many distinct characteristics, the St. Johns is one of few major rivers in the nation that flow north and one of only 14 rivers to be named an "American Heritage River."
- It takes 500 volunteers three days to attach the more than 100,000 grapefruits, oranges and tangerines to the colorful citrus floats that will wind through the streets of downtown Orlando during the annual **Fresh From Florida Parade**. The fruit is attached to the floats using rubber bands and after the parade; it is donated to local food banks.
- Since 1986, **Give Kids The World** has provided a dream vacation to Central Florida to more than 105,000 children with life-threatening illnesses and their families.
- The Orlando area hosts several high-profile golf events each year: the PGA's **Arnold Palmer Invitational Presented by MasterCard**, formerly the Bay Hill Invitational, in March and the PGA's **Children's Miracle Network Classic** in October. Bragging rights are at stake each March when PGA golfers who reside in Lake Nona take on their cross-town rivals from Isleworth for the **Tavistock Cup**.
- **Clean the World**, a not-for-profit charitable organization based in Orlando, has redistributed more than 9.5 million soap bars and 200,000 pounds (90,719 kilograms) of bottled amenities throughout the U.S. and more than 40 countries.

For more information about vacation experiences in Orlando, to order a complimentary vacation planning kit that includes a comprehensive *Official Visitors Guide* and *Orlando Magicard*[®] or to purchase discount attraction tickets, visitors can log onto Orlando's official website at VisitOrlando.com or call an Official Travel Counselor at 1-800-551-0181 (United States and Canada) or 407-363-5872. For real time updates, follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/VisitOrlando](https://twitter.com/VisitOrlando) or Facebook at [Facebook.com/VisitOrlando](https://facebook.com/VisitOrlando). While in Orlando, visitors may stop by the Official Visitor Center located at 8723 International Drive, at the southeast corner of International Drive and Austrian Row. The Official Visitor Center is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. (closes at 4 p.m. on Thanksgiving, Dec. 24 and Dec. 31 and is closed Dec. 25).