A GUIDE TO INCLUSIVITY & LEADERSHIP

IN TAMPA BAY

Visit Tampa Bay appreciates the opportunity to share more information about our organization and our inclusive and diverse destination. Tampa Bay has always been and will continue to be a community that welcomes everyone.

The travel industry is founded on hospitality and is made up of many of the community's most welcoming and inclusive individuals. Tampa Bay is both a diverse residential community and an international destination that welcomes visitors from all backgrounds and beliefs to our destination.

Event professionals can be certain that attendees from all backgrounds and identities will feel valued and respected – come as you are, and you will no doubt be welcomed with open arms.

VISIT TAMPA BAY
TREASURE AWAITS



> As Mayor of Tampa, I can absolutely assure anyone and everyone considering a visit or move to Tampa that they will be welcomed with open arms. Diversity and inclusion are central to what makes Tampa one of America's greatest and friendliest cities. That will never change, regardless of what happens in Tallahassee.
>
> *- Mayor Jane Castor*



VISIT TAMPA BAY
TREASURE AWAITS

CITY OF TAMPA

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Jane Castor, Mayor

Greetings:



Tampa, Florida has a unique culture and rich heritage, and our city is proud to be well-known globally as a diverse and inclusive community that promotes equity and celebrates all its citizens, businesses, and organizations for the contributions and positive impact they make within our neighborhoods.

The Tampa Bay region is well-known for its rich history and diverse blend of people. The City of Tampa is very proud of our inclusiveness and protects all residents and visitors from discrimination and harassment, including those within the LGBTQ community and those of other cultures who celebrate their own unique traditions and beliefs. We have proudly and consistently received the top score of 100 from the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's Municipal Equity Index for our LGBTQ inclusive laws, policies, and services. The Tampa community proudly celebrates and promotes our inclusiveness with community events such as festivals, parades, and concerts that incorporate our diverse cultural make-up. As a city, we take enormous pride in the progress we have made over the years to ensure all people, citizens and visitors alike, are treated with dignity, equality, respect, and civility. Promoting and protecting our inclusiveness contributes greatly to Tampa's success as a diverse city and enhances our economic growth, improves neighborhoods, advances the arts and culture scene, and adds to our rich and unique heritage.

I hope you have an opportunity to visit our wonderful city, whether attending a conference or convention, enjoying a major professional sporting event, or to just spend time in our unique community. You will discover that Tampa is one of the greatest and most welcoming places, and your visit is sure to be a positive and memorable experience.

Sincerely,

Jane Castor

Jane Castor

VISIT TAMPA BAY
TREASURE AWAITS



Since its inception, Tampa Bay has flourished because of the diversity of its people. From the early 1800s, when our destination was a little more than a military outpost and fishing village, to the present day's booming metropolis. This community has thrived because of a blend of people and cultures that have created the unique and memorable experiences that make Tampa Bay Florida's top destination for visitors and meetings.

Cuban cigar rollers and African American musicians helped lay the foundation for the heart of Florida's Gulf Coast, which remains a magnet for fortune-seekers who add their unique flavors to the mix of local life.

The arrival of Henry Plant's railroad and Vicente Martinez Ybor's cigar factory in the mid-1880s turned Tampa Bay into a thriving area for immigrants from Cuba, Spain, Italy, Germany, Eastern Europe, and beyond – supercharging its diversity, industry, and creativity.

Our development has come with lessons, and we have grown stronger as a community. We celebrate our diverse community year-round with festivals, parades, and restaurants that fuse the best part of our kaleidoscope of cultures into unique creations.

Wherever you're from, we know you will easily find yourself reflected in the people you meet here. While here, you will experience languages, rituals, and cultures you've never known. Simply put, its multicultural charm is Tampa Bay's most significant treasure. Treasure Awaits!

SANTIAGO C. CORRADA
President and CEO, Visit Tampa Bay

CITY OF TAMPA

DEMOGRAPHICS & SAFETY

Tampa Bay embraces diversity through inclusion, and we have a vibrant cultural community to show for it.

DID YOU KNOW?

Tampa Bay ranks **17th** out of the 228 ***Most Diverse Cities in America***

Source: Niche: 2023 Most Diverse Cities in America

Jane Castor is Tampa's **openly LGBTQ+ mayor,** elected in 2019, and won re-election in 2023

Tampa has a **lower crime rate** than similarly sized metro areas.

– U.S. News & World Report

Tampa Bay has a **100% score** on the *Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index Scorecard.*

POPULATION

398,173

AGE

6.2%	Under 5 years
21.4%	Under 18 years
12.8%	65 years and over

RACE

58.8%	Caucasian
26.2%	Hispanic or Latino
22.4%	Black or African American
10.1%	Two or More Races
4.6%	Asian
0.2%	American Indian and Alaska Native

VIEW FULL REPORT

Source: US Census Bureau

VISIT TAMPA BAY RESOURCES

VIDEOS



ALL ARE WELCOME IN TAMPA BAY

Our dynamic destination is home to a community that celebrates everyone, and all are welcomed, appreciated, and respected for who they are, regardless of their unique backgrounds. Come as you are and experience hospitality as bright as our sunshine in Tampa Bay.



TESTIMONIALS

While Tampa Bay is a great place to do business – it is also a melting pot of different cultures, people, and traditions. Our destination is renowned for its warm and welcoming hospitality that extends to all visitors. This sense of inclusivity and familiarity is deeply ingrained in the city's culture, making it the perfect location for your meeting. In Tampa Bay, all are welcome.



THE MANY LAYERS OF TAMPA BAY

From its earliest days, Tampa Bay has thrived on the diversity of its people. Cuban cigar rollers and African-American musicians helped lay the foundation for a modern metropolis that remains a magnet for fortune-seekers from across the country and around the world – newcomers who add their own unique flavors to the mix of local life.



TAMPA BAY PRIDE

Tampa Bay is filled with Pride! Visit Tampa Bay's LGBTQ+ video showcases the best of our bold attractions, restaurants, and nightlife featuring our incredible GaYbor. There are hidden treasures around every corner in Tampa Bay.



CULTURE SERIES PLAYLIST

From its earliest days, Tampa Bay has thrived on the diversity of its people. Through our Cultural Series, you can learn about how the Cuban cigar rollers and Black musicians helped lay the foundation for a modern metropolis that remains a magnet for fortune seekers from across the country and around the world.



ACCESSIBLE TAMPA BAY

Bask in the sun of Florida's Most exciting destination and experience Tampa Bay's accessible attractions for travelers with special needs. Join Jamie, your accessible travel expert, as she shares some of her favorite mobility-friendly attractions.

VISIT TAMPA BAY YOUTUBE CHANNEL





TAMPA BAY MULTICULTURAL GUIDE

The Multicultural Guide was first published in 2018 and spotlights Tampa Bay's unique blend of history and culture that sets this community apart from its peers in Florida and elsewhere. It describes the ways Tampa Bay offers visitors an experience they cannot have anywhere else. By capturing a wide range of cultural groups and experiences, the guide reveals to meeting planners and leisure visitors the many facets of the community, allowing visitors to make unique discoveries while they also find themselves and their interests reflected in the destination.

VIEW THE GUIDE





VISIT TAMPA GAY

Visit Tampa Gay was developed and first published in 2019 with the help of Creative Loafing, a popular arts weekly with a large LGBT following, Visit Tampa Gay aims to introduced the Tampa Bay region to LGBT travelers looking for a change of pace and alternatives to their usual Sunshine State adventures. Tampa Bay's reputation as a family-friendly destination appeals to the growing number of same-sex couples raising children, as does the proximity of beaches regularly ranked among the best in the country.

VIEW THE GUIDE

WEBPAGES & CONTENT



MULTICULTURAL MEETINGS

The Heart of Florida's Gulf Coast is a mecca of sunshine and opportunity for all. Tampa Bay is known for its cultures and backgrounds that have shaped the city we know today and is displayed through the diverse groups and meetings that are held. Accessibility, affordability, and amenities are what make this stellar destination the perfect place to unlock the potential of your next meeting.

LEARN MORE



ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL

Adventure Easily and experience Tampa Bay's accessible attractions for travelers with special needs. Our destination offers unique experiences, offering unforgettable memories, and specific accessibility guidelines for people of all abilities to enjoy.

LEARN MORE



CONQUER WITH PRIDE

When it comes to having fun, Tampa Bay has everything under the sun. From art festivals and culinary delights to dazzling dance clubs and outdoor adventures, there's a treasure trove of discoveries waiting for you.

LEARN MORE



MULTICULTURAL EVENTS

Discover the vibrant and diverse world of events and festivals that Tampa Bay has to offer. Immerse yourself in cultural celebrations, savor culinary delights from around the world, and enjoy authentic performances that showcase the richness of different traditions.

LEARN MORE

DISCOVER TAMPA BAY'S MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESS COMMUNITY

INDUSTRY GUIDANCE

INTERNATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

"IGLTA was founded in Florida 40 years ago and has many valued members and partners located in this U.S. state, where the government is currently focused on enacting laws that endanger and demean LGBTQ+ people and other marginalized communities.

This hateful legislation contradicts the messages of inclusivity that we strive to elevate in the travel industry globally and defies the very spirit of hospitality. But laws are not reflective of an entire state or population.

IGLTA will always stand with our members against boycotts, choosing to unite with the many destinations, tourism businesses, and individuals in Florida and beyond that celebrate equity, diversity, and inclusion. It is through these connections that we can create and maintain safe spaces for all travelers."

READ FULL RESPONSE

NATIONAL COALITION OF BLACK MEETING PROFESSIONALS

"To be clear, the NAACP's Travel Advisory is not a ban or a boycott of the State of Florida. It is an advisory that implores visitors to be aware of their surroundings and to be purposeful in how they engage while traveling. It is our belief that travel is a personal decision, rooted in hospitality, curated experiences, and a vast eco-system of dollars generated within a community."

READ FULL RESPONSE

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

"In ASAE's case, the input of our destination partners in the host city can often help us address policy concerns and maintain our values without moving a meeting or boycotting a city or state," said Michelle Mason, ASAE president and CEO.

READ FULL RESPONSE

DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL

"Boycotts are not effective because they aren't narrowly tailored enough to inflict pain on the people who can make the change," says Jack Johnson, chief advocacy officer for Destinations International.

READ FULL RESPONSE

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

(S.B. 300 / HB 7)

The 6-week abortion ban signed by Governor DeSantis will make it illegal to have an abortion in the state of Florida after 6 weeks of pregnancy. Exceptions written into the law include cases of rape, incest, and human sex trafficking, and maintains current exceptions for the life and health of the mother and for fatal fetal anomalies.

Implementation of the six-week ban is on hold as the Florida Supreme Court decides on a separate matter: a 15-week abortion ban, signed into law last year by Gov. Ron DeSantis.

The majority of states have restrictions on abortion access, including Arizona, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas.

LEARN MORE

CONSTITUTIONAL CARRY FACT SHEET

HB 543 - CONSTITUTIONAL CARRY

The "Public Safety Bill", or HB 543, will allow individuals 21 years of age or older to carry a concealed weapon or firearm within state lines without a permit. The Law applies to residents and nonresidents of Florida. The Law, which was passed and will go into effect on July 1, 2023, does not impact open carry, which remains unlawful. Until HB 543 takes effect, individuals must be licensed to carry a concealed weapon or firearm.

Quick Facts:

Florida is the 26th state to take effect, joining: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

Convention destinations currently allowing permitless concealed carry include:

- Phoenix
- Atlanta
- Indianapolis
- Kansas City
- Louisville
- St. Louis
- Nashville
- Austin
- Ft. Worth
- Houston
- Dallas
- San Antonio
- Salt Lake City
- Columbus

- The majority of U.S. states have enacted permitless concealed carry laws.
- Permitless carry does not enable someone to openly carry in public.
- There will be no changes to gun purchase regulations – federal and state background checks still apply.
- Permitless carry law only extends to individuals who meet the present criteria for a concealed carry permit.
- Present concealed carry laws will apply to individuals carrying permitless beginning July 1, 2023.

VISIT TAMPA BAY
TREASURE AWAITS