

Winter Wander-land: A Day in The District

It's wintertime in Fort Lauderdale, which means the weather is superb! Low humidity and crisp evenings, merged with a bounty of exciting things to explore, offer visitors the ideal getaway and perfect motivation to "wander" around The District! Take a look at our proposed day: You may want to take one, several, or all of our suggestions, and map out your own adventure at #DotheDistrict.

9:00 a.m. Begin your morning at the glorious Bonnet House Museum & Gardens. Register in advance for one of the many workshops, from Basket Weaving and Orchid Care to Birding. Or, if you are remaining in the area for the season, then you may want to explore a 5- or 6-week series of classes, including Calligraphy, Acrylic and Watercolor painting techniques and many others. Classes run from two to four hours and are offered at various times of the day. Please check the calendar for details, and register in advance.

There are also several guided tours to choose from on Tuesdays through Sundays. These intriguing tours explore the lush grounds with their unique flora and fauna, various orchid greenhouses and the sprawling home with its artists' touches and quirky features.

Noon You've worked up a good appetite so head on over to GALLERYone — a Doubletree Suites by Hilton Hotel, and order up lunch at its Vue on the Water Restaurant. The ideal spot for contemporary cuisine in a relaxed atmosphere, this restaurant overlooks the Intracoastal Waterway and is a wonderful place to enjoy outdoor dining in the winter.

1:30 p.m. Now that you've satisfied your food and thirst cravings, head on over to the Historic Stranahan House. Daily tours at this enchanting historic home, the birthplace of Fort Lauderdale, are available at 1, 2 and 3 p.m. daily. Throughout the season, there are many unique events that bring history to life, such as the Victorian Tea Party, a birthday celebration honoring the city's matriarch and "first lady" Ivy Stranahan, on Feb. 26.

4:00 p.m. NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale is a premier destination for exhibitions and programs encompassing all facets of civilization's visual history. The Museum's 83,000-square-foot building contains 25,000 square feet of exhibition space, a 256-seat auditorium, Museum Store and Cafe. If you happen to stop by on the first Thursday of the month, you can enjoy complimentary museum admission to all of the exhibitions. This *Free First Thursday Starry Nights* is presented by PNC Bank and also includes 2-for-1 specials on wine and craft beers, light bites in the Museum Café, drawings for prizes and hands-on art projects for all ages.

6:00 p.m. History Museum Fort Lauderdale brings the stories of Greater Fort Lauderdale's diverse community to life through educational experiences, cultural exhibits, research, and preservation for future generations. There are daily guided tours of the grounds, including the New River Inn (1905), King Cromartie House Museum

(1907), 1899 Ivy Cromartie Schoolhouse Replica (1976) and Hoch Research Library. There is also a variety of events offered throughout the month, including monthly lectures such as “The Step ... a book signing with NASA Scientist Martha Lemasters” on Jan. 9 and “Bringing Black History into Focus” on Feb. 13.

Evening

There is so much to see, hear and experience during the winter in the Riverwalk A&E District. If you love the glitz and glam of Broadway, then you will want to check out “Cabaret,” “The Little Mermaid,” “Something Rotten” or “Matilda” at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts. These elaborate, award-winning musicals will delight you at every turn and have you humming some favorite tunes as you exit the theater. Perhaps you want to explore the world of opera. “Eugene Onegin,” Tchaikovsky’s most beloved and famous opera, will be presented by Florida Grand Opera at the Broward Center on Feb. 9 and 11. Whether your tastes run to jazz or classical, intimate theatrical experiences or blockbuster musicals, on winter evenings in Fort Lauderdale, there is something for everyone.

For a truly great dining experience, you will want to reserve a seat at Marti’s New River Bistro before the performance. This casually elegant waterfront dining spot offers a delectable three-course prix fixe dinner menu, an extensive wine list and contemporary cocktails. Indoor and outdoor seating are available and reservations may be made through OpenTable.

Possibly one of the best parts of spending a day in The District during the winter is that coats are seldom required. All you need to bring is your thirst to explore and your hunger to experience. We invite you to create your own Day in The District itinerary and share it with us on Facebook or on Twitter. Happy wandering!