

PASS-A-GRILLE BEACH

Monday, June 20, 2022

8:30am-8:00pm

This quaint, beach town, located at the southern tip of St. Pete's Beach is 2 hours from The Villages. Upon arrival you will find unique restaurants, bars, 8th Avenue shopping, fishing, and boating excursion options. There is no alcohol allowed on the beach and no lifeguard on duty.

The depth of the beach is short, allowing for ease of access from the beach to amenities and activities. The historic Merry Pier is a short walk (~3 blocks) from the beach. It is a great place to enjoy the ambience of this small town, catch the shuttle to Shell Key Island or go fishing.

For more information on this delightful town, please visit:

<https://www.visitpassagrille.com/>

Since you will have the entire day at Pass-a-Grille, you'll be able to do any of these things, or all of these things! You can walk over to Merry Pier and board the Shell Key Shuttle to spend up to 4 hours in the pristine Shell Key Preserve; you can fish off the Merry Pier with their gear, or gear you brought from home; you can shop in the historic 8th Avenue area with its abundance of stores and restaurants; or you can hop on the FreeBee Shuttle service that serves the area at no cost and head up to the restaurants on 21st Avenue.

We will not be stopping for dinner on the way back to the Villages, allowing you to enjoy the wide variety of restaurants on Pass-a-Grille. You don't even have to leave the beach to eat, because Paradise Grill is situated on the sands of Pass-a-Grille Beach. But in case you do want to leave the beach, our buses will stop back at 3pm and 4:30pm so you can load up your beach gear and have both hands free for shopping or eating.

The only deadline you have all day is to be ready to board your bus to head home at 6:00pm.

Getting Around on your own if you want to go further than your feet will take you:

Freebee, the free shuttle on the island makes getting around on Pass-A-Grille easy. The shuttle provides a free, door-to-door on-demand transportation service. Shuttle may pick-up/drop-off anywhere within the boundaries. Download the app called "Freebee Travel."

Freebee runs along Gulf Blvd (north and south), beginning north at 75th Ave. to Pass-a-Grille Way at 21st Ave. then circles back on the southern end of the island on Gulf Way. See link to map below.

Rentals (chairs, fishing, bicycles):

Sand Dunes Beach Services: Rent an umbrella with 2 chairs for \$30.

The Merry Pier:

Fishing rod rentals. \$15 (+tax) for 4 hours. Includes ½ # of bait and 1 rig replacement. Number of rods is limited--1st come, 1st served. Pier passes serve as the fishing license required for fishing on Merry Pier premises only. Otherwise, please call 888-347-4356 for an immediate license or go online at myfwc.com to obtain a license.

Bicycle rentals. \$8.00 (+ tax) by the hour. Includes a helmet and a bike lock.

Excursion to Shell Key Preserve via the Shell Key Shuttle

Take a ride to the wild side! Shell Key Preserve, an undeveloped barrier island, just off the coast south of Pass-A-Grille protects marine habitat, houses shorebird nesting and is a quiet spot and a wildlife preserve.

The island offers shallow water for wading, shelling, and swimming, or you may want to just take a blanket and a book to enjoy a day of relaxation. For those beachcombers who need to explore--shelling, snorkeling, bird watching, and viewing manatee--are all options. Please note, there are no facilities on the island.

Catch the shuttle for Shell Key from Merry Pier at 12 or 2 pm. Shuttle returns at 2:15 & 4:15 pm, your choice. The cost is \$25, and includes an umbrella, mask, and snorkel. You can bring your buggy with other needed gear.

Fishing:

The Merry Pier: For those not so interested in the beach or shopping, The Merry Pier, a fishing and boating site, offers fishing opportunities. Common catches are snapper, snook, flounder, redfish, etc.

Fishing rod rentals. \$15 (+tax) for 4 hours. Includes ½ # of bait and 1 rig replacement. Number of rods is limited--1st come-1st served. Pier passes (\$3.21/day) cover the fishing license requirement--for fishing on the pier only. For fishing on other locations, please call 888-347-4356 for an immediate license or go online at myfwc.com.

Where should we eat?:

- **8th Avenue Area:**

The Brass Monkey: 709 Gulf Way. Dine overlooking the Gulf. Serving burgers, pizza, seafood, and wings. Open from 11:30am-10pm. <https://thebrassmonkey.net/>

The Hurricane Restaurant: 809 Gulf Way. Offers seafood options. Three levels of views. Opens at 11:30am. www.thehurricane.com

Paradise Grille: 900 Gulf Way. This is the only restaurant located on the beach. Serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner in an oceanside location. Opens at 8am. <https://paradisegrille.com/>

Paradise Sweets: 709 Gulf Way: Serves coffee & sweets. Opens at 10:00am. <https://www.facebook.com/Paradise-Sweets-121938814532850/>

Sea Horse: 800 Pass-A-Grille Way (only 1 block away) Serves an American menu. Open from 8:00 am-**2:30pm**.

<https://www.facebook.com/Seahorse-Restaurant-187756567911437/>

- **21st Avenue Area:**

The Wharf: 2001 Pass-A-Grille Way. Offers a seafood menu with intercoastal views. Opens 11am. <https://wharfrestaurant.org/>

Sea Critters Café: 2007 Pass-A-Grille Way. Dockside seafood spot with a deck. Opens at 11am. <https://www.seacritterscafe.com/>

Shopping: Visit historic 8th Ave. which offers something for everyone. Complete your trip with shopping for souvenirs, local artists' works, beach boutiques, and treasures in coastal, nautical and beach themes.

If you'd like to take some fresh seafood home, without having to fish for it, stop at The Merry Pier and visit their **Fish Market**.

Links to additional information.

- Shell Key Preserve. <https://www.pinellascounty.org/park/managedlands/skp.htm>
- Shell Key Shuttle. shellkeyshuttle.com.
- Freebee Shuttle information: <https://www.stpetebeach.org/273/Freebee-Shuttle-Service>
- Freebee Map:
<https://www.stpetebeach.org/ImageRepository/Document?documentID=979>
- Gulf Beach Museum: Although only open on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, this link provides interesting information on the history of the area.
<https://gulfbeachesmuseum.org/>