

Siesta Key Beach
Featuring
International Sand Sculpting Festival
~NOW with 80+ vendors, live music and food trucks~
Monday, November 14th, 8:30 – 8:30

Siesta Key Beach is a 5-star, naturally beautiful beach. It was ranked the #1 Beach in the USA in 2020 by Trip Advisor. The water is gorgeous and the quartz crystal, powdery sand is some of the softest, coolest sand in the world. Come join us on a trip to Siesta Key Beach!

Please note that as of 10/12/22, the beach conditions were great, the water color had returned to "clear," and no floating debris or algae is being reported in the water or on the beach! This is great news!

Upon arrival at Siesta Key Beach, you may immediately attend The Classic International Sand Sculpting Festival, hang out at the Pavillion Cafe, or head directly to the beach.

The Sand Sculpting Festival, hosting 24 competitive artists, takes place directly on the broad, white glistening sand. The artwork is beyond your expectations! You do not want to miss this.

As an added bonus, the Festival now has an event stage, live music and food trucks! In addition to the sculptures, the Festival has grown to include 80+ vendors. A ticket is required to enter; but a senior citizens discount is given, bringing the ticket cost to \$8. You may prepay using link below or purchase at the gate. The price is the same either way.

For tickets to the Crystal Classic Sculpting Festival: https://siestakeycrystalclassic.thundertix.com/orders/new?performance_id=2837732

The Pavillion Cafe, an above-average concession stand, is nearby, if you decide not to enter the Festival. It has an upper deck with picnic tables, so you can grab a snack or a drink. (You can bring alcohol to Sarasota County beaches, as long as it is not in a glass container.)

If you decide to stake out your spot on the beach first, we'll be at Siesta Key until 3:30pm, so you'll have plenty of time to take in the sculptures, sample the foods, shop at the vendor booths and relax at the beach. My favorite shop, Sand Ornaments by K-Star, sells Christmas ornaments made from sand. They are very detailed, durable, and make great stocking stuffers.

If you've not been to Siesta Key Beach previously, it is the widest beach we visit ... so wide that the county installed beach mats to help navigate the soft sand. Be prepared for an 1,100' trek to the water.....but definitely a worthwhile trek! There are beach wheelchairs available on a first come, first served basis at the Pavilion. There are no lifeguards at Siesta Key Beach this time of year.

The finale of our trip is dinner in Siesta Key Village! At 3:30 pm, the buses will load up where they dropped us off. The Siesta Key Village offers a variety of tropical bars, casual restaurants, shops and boutiques along Ocean Blvd., the main street in the Village. You will have plenty of time for dinner and shopping. The Village is only a few blocks away, where you can choose from these (and many other) restaurants, all within about 3 blocks on Ocean Blvd.

Here are a few of the dining options:

Daiquiri Deck: 5250 Ocean Blvd; Relaxed atmosphere, frozen daiquiris, seafood menu <https://www.daiquirideck.com/>

The Fudge Factory: 5263 Ocean Blvd. Homemade fudge, chocolate, and ice cream. <https://www.sarasotafudgefactory.com/>

The Hub Baja Grill: 5148 Ocean Blvd <https://thehubsiestakey.com/menus/>

Island House Tao & Grill 5110 Ocean Blvd <https://www.islandhousetapandgrill.com/>

The Lobster Pot: 5157 Ocean Blvd <https://www.sarasotalobsterpot.com/menu/dinner>

Siesta Key Oyster Bar: 5238 Ocean Blvd; Casual seafood & bar fare; <https://www.skob.com/>

The Seafood Joint 217 Avenida Madera; Specializes in Florida-local fresh seafood products. Monday: \$5 mussels; counter/take-out & table service. <https://theseafoodjoint.com/menu/>

Gilligans Island Bar 5253 Ocean Blvd; bar and grill, casual fare <https://www.gilligansislandbar.com/menu/>

Ripfire Pizza 5218 Ocean Blvd; Offering 12" pizzas, cooked fresh to order. They prefer online ordering, counter service. <https://www.ripfirepizza.com/menu>

To summarize your day:

8:15-8:30 Depart TV from Hope Lutheran Church for Siesta Key Beach

11:00 Arrive SK/Sand Sculpting

3:30 Depart the beach for Siesta Key Village

6:00 Depart for The Villages (arrival ~ 8:15 p.m.)