

MARCH 2015 – Martin County
 “A Weekend in Martin County, Fla.”
 Clara Bosonetto
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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2015 THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION

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TRAVEL

A WEEKEND IN ...



Clara Bosonetto

Martin County, Fla.

Martin County communities of Port Salerno, Stuart, Palm City, Jensen Beach, Indiantown, Jupiter Island, Hobe Sound and Hutchinson Island boast of having 13 beaches and more than 70 parks. Building restrictions have limited structures to four sto-

ries, preserving views throughout the county and offering Old Florida charm and Key West style. Upcoming events include the Sailfish Regatta in May and the Jensen Beach Pineapple Festival in October. Visit www.DiscoverMartin.com for trip planning.



BUDGET
 A reef near the shore creates shallow pools at Bathub Reef Beach. The beach on South Hutchinson Island has a bathhouse, a picnic pavilion and an island fishing pier. CONTRIBUTED BY WWW.VISITFLORIDA.COM

Stay
 Step back in time to Old Florida with a stay at the family-owned and -operated Driftwood Motel. Built in 1958, this property offers a setting on the banks of the Indian River with lodging from efficiencies to three-room apartments. All have full kitchens. Rates from \$109 include free Wi-Fi. The Atlantic Ocean is 2 miles away; a half mile to quaint downtown Jensen Beach, and walking distance to Conchy Joe's seafood restaurant. 4150 N.E. Indian River Drive, 772-334-2237, driftwoodmoteljensen.com.

Eat
 Knock your seafood socks off at Gettin Crabby. It's titty (five tables), friendly and often standing room only. Appetizers, \$8-\$12; entrees, \$18-\$24. Live music on weekends. 4110 S.E. Salerno Road, Stuart, 772-463-1166, www.GettinCrabby.me.

Experience
 On Hutchinson Island, visit the 57-acre Florida Oceanographic Coastal Center for a family-friendly day of fun and learning - with aquaria, guided walks on nature trails, a lagoon, butterfly garden, touch tanks and a children's pavilion; \$12 adults; \$6 ages 3-12. 890 N.E. Ocean Blvd., 772-225-0505, www.floridaocean.org. Grab a mask for a snorkel adventure at Bathub Reef Beach, where a man-made reef extends into the ocean while remaining in a protective area.



MODERATE
 Two subtropical rivers, the St. Lucie and Indian, where uninhabited islands and sandbars divert the flow of water before flowing into the ocean. CONTRIBUTED BY WWW.DISCOVERMARTIN.COM

Stay
 Built in 1914 in historic downtown Stuart, the Old Colorado Inn is a couple of hundred feet from the St. Lucie River that leads to the Intracoastal Waterway and the Atlantic Ocean and a short walk to waterfront dining and entertainment. Choose from modern studios (from \$159 through April 30), suites, a two-bedroom cottage (from \$239), or rooms in the historic guest house, 211 S. Colorado Ave., 772-215-3437, www.oldcoloradoinn.com.

Eat
 The Landing is an open-air Key West-style restaurant located at the Neelies Island Marina (the gate guard will let you in). Lunch specialties include Moli Ruben and Mandarin Salad (to \$14); dinners, \$17-\$22. 9806 S. Ocean Drive, Jensen Beach, 772-229-0246, www.thelandingrestaurant.net.

Experience
 Touted as the most biodiverse lagoon ecosystem in the Northern Hemisphere is St. Lucie Inlet - a habitat for more 4,300 species of plants and animals, including more than 30 threatened and endangered species such as manatees, wood storks, sand hill cranes and peregrine falcons. Located between Hutchinson Island and Jupiter Island, it's one of six inlets into the Indian River Lagoon and a best-kept South Florida secret. Take a three-hour guided kayak tour through a mangrove forest, in search of manatees and dolphins; \$75 per person. 772-205-5899, www.rckayakfishing.com.



SPLURGE
 The legacy of old Florida lives on in Martin County. Catch a show at downtown Stuart's Historic Lyric Theatre, named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1993. CONTRIBUTED BY WWW.DISCOVERMARTIN.COM

Stay
 The Hutchinson Island Marriott Beach Resort features an 18-hole golf course, marina, tennis, three outdoor pools, nature and biking trails and a front row on the Atlantic beach. Rates from \$229. 555 N.E. Ocean Blvd., 772-225-3700, www.marriott.com.

Eat
 Take a Southern food adventure at District Table & Bar, where guests chat up the chef in the open, collaborative kitchen. Locally sourced fisherman and farmer products influence the ever-evolving menu; \$9-\$25; turf to \$42. 900 S.E. Indian St., Stuart, 772-324-8357, www.districttableandbar.com.

Experience
 Stuart is famed for its historic and pedestrian-friendly downtown with a river walk and eclectic boutiques. Shop for fresh ingredients to live music every Sunday at the Green Market near City Hall (9 a.m. - 4 p.m.). It's also home to the landmark Lyric Theatre, built in 1926 as a silent movie house. Performances range from headliners (Judy Collins, Poet) to film and stage productions (ticket prices vary to \$80). 59 S.W. Flagler Ave., 772-286-7827, www.LyricTheatre.com.

Bosonetto is a retired travel consultant. Look for her daily deals on ajc.com/travel.

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A weekend in Martin County, Fla.

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Posted: 12:00 a.m. Wednesday, March 11, 2015

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By Clara Bosonetto - For the AJC

Weekend in Martin County, Fla., one of three ways: on a budget, spending a bit more, or when the getaway calls for a splurge.

Martin County communities of Port Salerno, Stuart, Palm City, Jensen Beach, Indiantown, Jupiter Island, Hobe Sound and Hutchinson Island boast of having 13 beaches and more than 70 parks. Building restrictions have limited structures to four stories, preserving views throughout the county and offering Old Florida charm and Key West style. Upcoming events include the Sailfish Regatta in May and the Jensen Beach Pineapple Festival in October. Visit www.DiscoverMartin.com for trip planning.



A reef near the shore creates shallow pools at Bathub Reef Beach. The beach on South Hutchinson Island has a bathhouse. ... Read More

Getting there: Martin County is 45 minutes from Palm Beach International Airport (from \$118 Delta, nonstop), an hour from Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (from \$78 Spirit, nonstop), 90 minutes from Miami International Airport (from \$49 Frontier, nonstop).

BUDGET

Stay: Step back in time to Old Florida with a stay at the family-owned and -operated Driftwood Motel. Built in 1958, this property offers a setting on the banks of the Indian River with lodging from efficiencies to three-room apartments. All have full kitchens. Rates from \$109 include free Wi-Fi. The Atlantic Ocean is 2 miles away; a half mile to quaint downtown Jensen Beach, and walking distance to Conchy Joe's seafood restaurant. 4150 N.E. Indian River Drive, 772-334-2237, <http://driftwoodmoteljensen.com>.

In this Section

- What to take to Antarctica
- Custom one-day tour is a good start to seeing Shanghai
- Here's what travelers should know about new credit card technology
- Oxnard: Little seaside town with lots to offer
- Universal Studios tour undergoes expensive makeover
- Pristine and powerful, Antarctica is alive - and enlivening
- Bunk beds are back, and not just for kids
- A prelude to the big wildflower show
- Alaska Airlines launches new customer service effort
- Blue Willow Inn's history is as juicy as the food



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