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# Totally Travel

April 2009

## SWEET ST. AUGUSTINE

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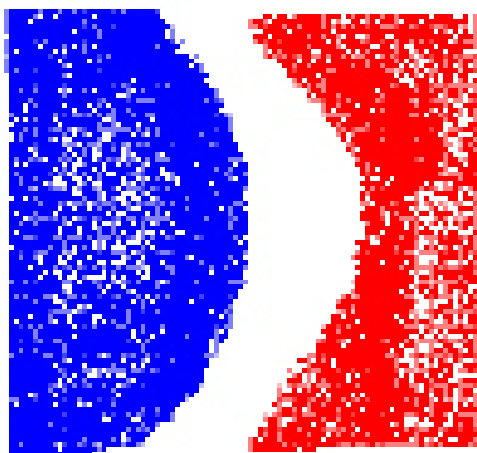


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# Totally Travel's



The Cruise Detectives  
pose by the Inspiration  
in Cozumel, Mexico.

## CRUISE DETECTIVES

THIS MONTH, KAEI & APRIL CHECK OUT CARNIVAL INSPIRATION  
STORY & PHOTOS BY KAEI CONFORTI.  
ASSISTED BY APRIL CONFORTI

## Shore Excursions in Grand Cayman

- \*Atlantis Submarine
- \*Best of Cayman Island Tour
- \*Cayman Pirate Encounter
- \*Coral Reef & Stingray Safari
- \*Shipwreck & Reef
- \*Stingray City Sandbar Snorkel
- \*The Trolley Roger
- \*The Seven Mile Beach Break
- \*Rum Explorer



Kaeli & April explore  
Seven Mile Beach  
in Grand Cayman.

## Shore Excursions in Cozumel:

- \*Clear Kayak & Snorkel Adventure
- \*Motorcycle Tour
- \*Deep Sea Fishing
- \*Dolphin Encounter
- \*Tulum Mayan Ruins
- \*Mexican Cuisine Cooking & Tasting
- \*Punta Sur Park
- \*Mayan Frontier by Horseback

The cruise was five days:  
From Tampa, FL to  
Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands  
& Cozumel, Mexico



Kaeli & April discover one  
of Cozumel's resident  
tourist traps.



A person with curly hair, seen from behind, is fishing from a boat. They are holding a fishing rod with a red and black reel. A small fish is visible on the line, suspended in the air above the water. The person is wearing a red shirt and a black and white striped life vest. The background is a calm body of water under a clear sky.

*Ah, relaxation.  
It missed you, too.*





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# CAPE CRUSADERS

# INVAD



# ORLANDO

Once a year, people from all over the world put on their tights and flock to the Orlando Convention Center for a chance to pay homage to all things fiction.

Story: Kaeli Conforti





Photo: Kaeli Conforti

From left to right: Storm, Wolverine, Beast, Rogue, Phoenix, Cyclops and Nightcrawler from the X-Men comic book series.

**I**t's the first day of Megacon, a three day Convention where fans gather in droves for a chance to pay homage to all things fiction, wearing anything and everything they can to portray their favorite fictional character for the weekend.

The event, which takes place at the end of February each year at the Orange County Convention

Center in Orlando, Florida, typically attracts upwards of 20,000 participants, resulting in a frenzy of costumed crusaders and the best deals all year for comic books, artwork, and handmade costumes, as well as intricately designed weapons inspired by the characters.

Guests even have the rare opportunity to shake hands with the stars themselves; there is a special section of the Convention Center

Hall set aside for the actors and actresses from various science fiction television shows and movies to do "meet and greet" sessions with their fans, who, naturally, are encouraged to purchase an autographed picture of their favorite celebrity. This year's 'media guests' included Lou Ferrigno, the star of the original series, "The Incredible Hulk," Margot Kidder, who played Lois Lane in the "Superman" mov-



Samantha Petrone, as "The Little Mermaid," sits outside the main room greeting guests. Photo: Kaeli Conforti



ies; Peter Mayhew, the man who played Chewbacca; and the cast of TV's "Battlestar Gallactica" among other stars present at the Con.

Throughout the Convention, many people in costume spoke to me about how much they enjoyed coming to Megacon – some of them since it began in 1993. The main reason: It feels like home to a lot of people who would normally be ostracized for

their strong devotion to comics.

Although admittedly not everyone attends Megacon for selfish reasons, the majority of the people who talked to me appreciated the attention, recognition and temporary stardom they received from being in costume. A few of them even wore such highly developed costumes they were unable to talk. Samantha Petrone's costume as the Little Mermaid was so in-

depth, she had to stay outside in the main lobby, since she was decked out in full mermaid attire and perched on a giant Paper Mache seashell. Lane Plamondon showed off his Spiderman costume, which he had created.

"It's my second time here as Spidey and everybody loves it," he said, adding that it had taken him three months to build the webbed bodysuit out of poly-





Photos: Kaeli Conforti

Top right (on opposite page): Erin Pyne dresses as Ginny Weasley while Corey Sutherland dresses as Luna Lovegood.

Bottom right (on opposite page): Carl Montes appears as Captain Jack Sparrow.

Top left (on this page): Griffin Barker and David Sadler dress as Ghostbusters.

Bottom left: Beware the Demon Barber! Ben Tappan is Sweeney Todd for a day.



eurothane and Lycra. "It's tight and it's hot, but it's stretchy."

Griffin Barker and his friends looked like they had stepped out of the "Ghostbusters" movies, pointing to the pieces of their assembled outfits and telling me how they had built their authentic looking packs out of wood and steel, explaining how they dressed up for attention.

Megacon is not for the faint of heart, but worth every minute.



Johnathan Carroll (left) and Danny Kelley (right) dress up as Superman, even going so far as to wear blue contacts for the occasion. Photo: Kaeli Conforti

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO MEGAICON? WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! SUBMIT YOUR STORY BY MAY 1ST FOR A CHANCE TO BE FEATURED IN OUR NEXT ISSUE! FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [TOTALLYTRAVEL.COM](http://TOTALLYTRAVEL.COM)



Story & Photos: Kaeli Conforti

# ST. AUGUSTINE

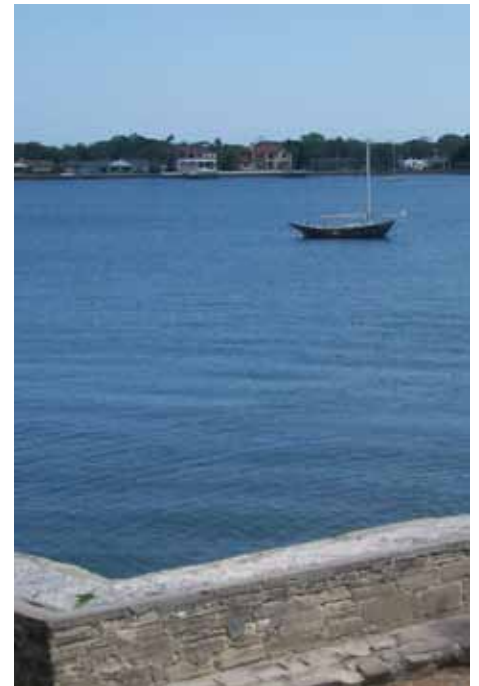
## FLORIDA'S GATEWAY TO THE PAST



A scenic tower near Flager College in downtown St. Augustine.



St. Augustine Lighthouse, on St. Augustine Beach across the Bridge of Lions.



Views from El Castillo de San Marcos (also in above photo)



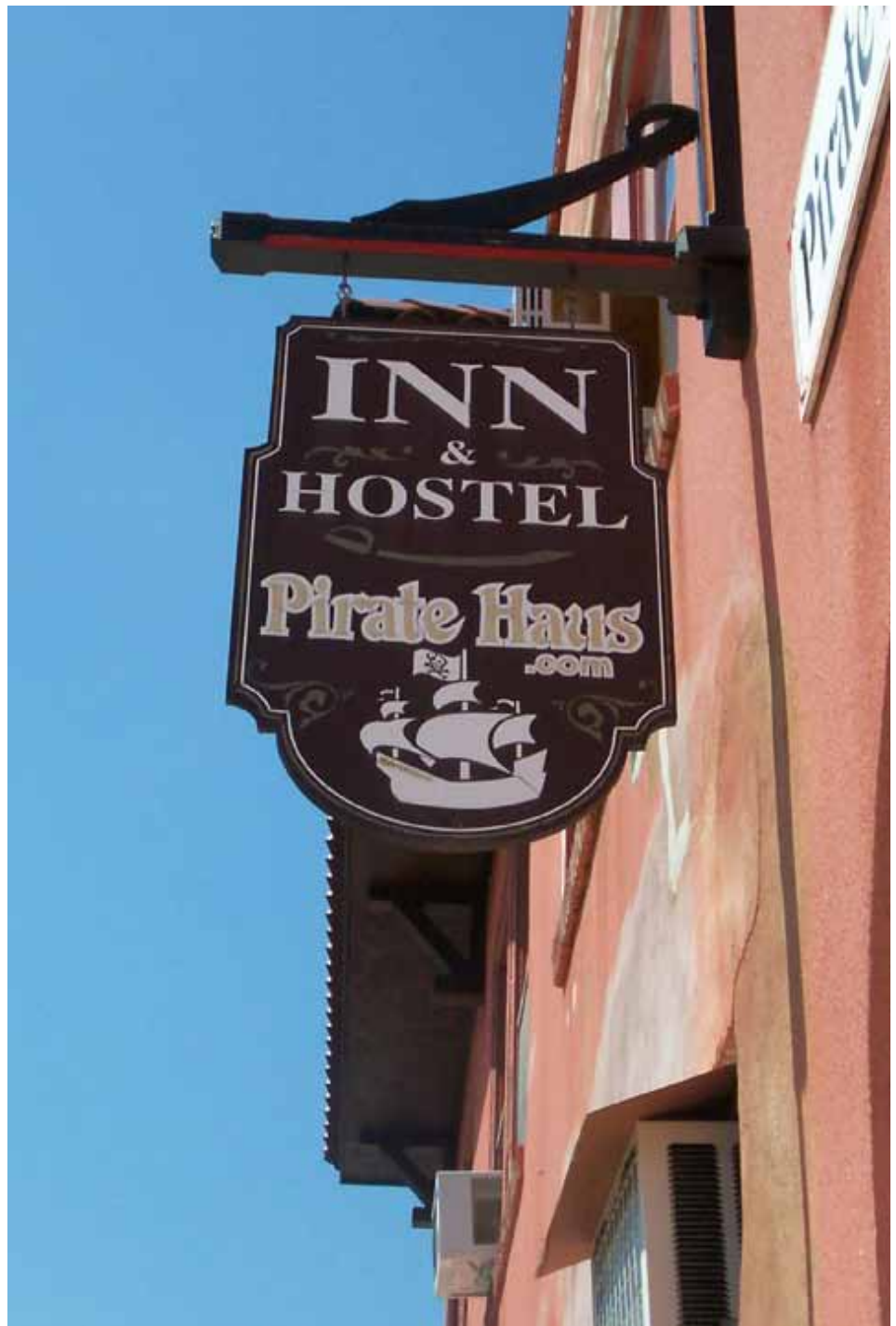
Walking through the streets of St. Augustine is like stepping back in time. Old fashioned, architectural wonders harking back to the seventeenth and eighteenth century line the streets, giving visitors a glimpse into the past. A good piece of advice to anyone visiting St. Augustine: Be sure to stay in a hotel, motel or bed & breakfast near St. George Street – where all the city's major attractions are.

Parking is a real challenge within the confining streets of Downtown St. Augustine, so it is better to park in your hotel's parking lot and just take a stroll.

Being the struggling college students we are, and eager for a new, exciting twist on an old fashioned bed & breakfast, we stayed at The Pirate Haus Inn, a pirate themed establishment on the corner of Charlotte and Treasury Streets that offered private rooms in addition to youth hostel-like quarters.

Upon entering the Pirate Haus Inn, and walking up the steps decorated in true pirate fashion, featuring the words to "Yo Ho, Yo Ho, A Pirate's Life For Me," we checked in at the front desk where "Captain Conrad" showed us to our rooms, providing us with maps of the area and books of coupons we later used at some of the attractions.

Our room was called "The Jungle Room," and we soon learned why. The walls, bedspread, the sink in the bathroom and even the shower curtain were decked out in jungle attire, featuring wall-



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sized jungle murals designed and painted by Elaine Juzwick and Pat Hitchcock, local painters from St. Augustine who also designed the other rooms in the Inn: The tropical fish room, pirate room, and the map room among other themes. For about \$75 a night, we got our own private room, featuring a queen sized bed and a set of bunk beds big enough for any pirate-at-heart.

The best part about staying at the Pirate Haus Inn: Free all you can eat breakfast every morning. The catch: You have to wash your own dishes once you're done.

Our first stop to investigate: Castillo de San Marcos, a national park two blocks away that was once a fort for the British and Spanish throughout different points in history, depending on the century.

Open from 8:45 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., the entrance fee is \$6 for adults while children are free. Guests are given the chance to have their picture taken on the drawbridge of the old Fort, before taking a self guided tour through the many rooms set up to let visitors have a peek into the everyday lives of the soldiers who lived and died there.

The creepiest part of the tour by far was the prison, where guests are only allowed to peer in through the circular window in the door. You feel as if you're being watched, and given all the stories about the soldiers who haunt the Castillo, you very well might be. We stepped outside just in time for a musketeer demonstration put on by a group of state park volunteers who were decked out in what looked like Revolutionary War outfits. As

the guns pop-popped behind us, we ducked back into the downstairs level to crawl through the short, narrow tunnel and check out what had once been a gun-powder storehouse hidden deep inside the building to prevent accidental explosions.

After spending about 2 hours exploring the Castillo, we decided to go for a walk down St. George Street to get a better feel of the city. Passing through the gates of the city, we watched as groups of tourists continued down the alleys, shopping at quaint little chocolate shops and stopping to buy souvenirs.

We decided to check out the Colonial Spanish Quarter's Living History Museum, a place where volunteers helped to recreate what life was like in St. Augustine during the 1740s.

Open daily from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., college students who show an I.D. can get in for \$4.25, while normal prices for adults are \$6.95. Children can get in for \$4.25.

Inside the old fashioned looking walls of the Museum, we were greeted by the town blacksmith, church scribe, carpenter, soldier's wife and a man fashioning satchels out of leather by hand, which we later learned were sold in the Museum gift shop.

Flagler College was really pretty although we missed the tour.

St. Augustine is the perfect place to go exploring with your camera. Whether you're a history buff or just like to relax and go for a stroll around town, St. Augustine helps everyone who comes to visit it to get a better understanding of Florida's past, giving us a better appreciation for where we came from.



Photo: Kaeli Conforti

YOU CAN READ  
MORE ABOUT  
KAELI'S TRIP TO  
ST. AUGUSTINE  
BY VISITING HER  
BLOG AT TOTALLY-  
TRAVEL.COM





A majestic fountain scene outside St. Augustine's Flagler College.

# STA TRAVEL

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A photograph of a gravel path leading into a forest. The path is covered in fallen brown leaves. On the right side of the path, there are large, dense green evergreen trees. On the left side, there are thinner, bare deciduous trees. The background is filled with more trees, some with green needles and others without leaves.

# *April's Photo Special: Blairsville, Georgia*

Deep in the heart of Blairsville, Georgia. So many trails, so little time.

Photo: Kaeli Conforti





Just one of the many scenic views along the trails. It's hard to believe you're standing on Blood Mountain overlooking Slaughter Mountain. Isn't it strange how a place so morbidly named can contain so much beauty? Photo: Kaeli Conforti





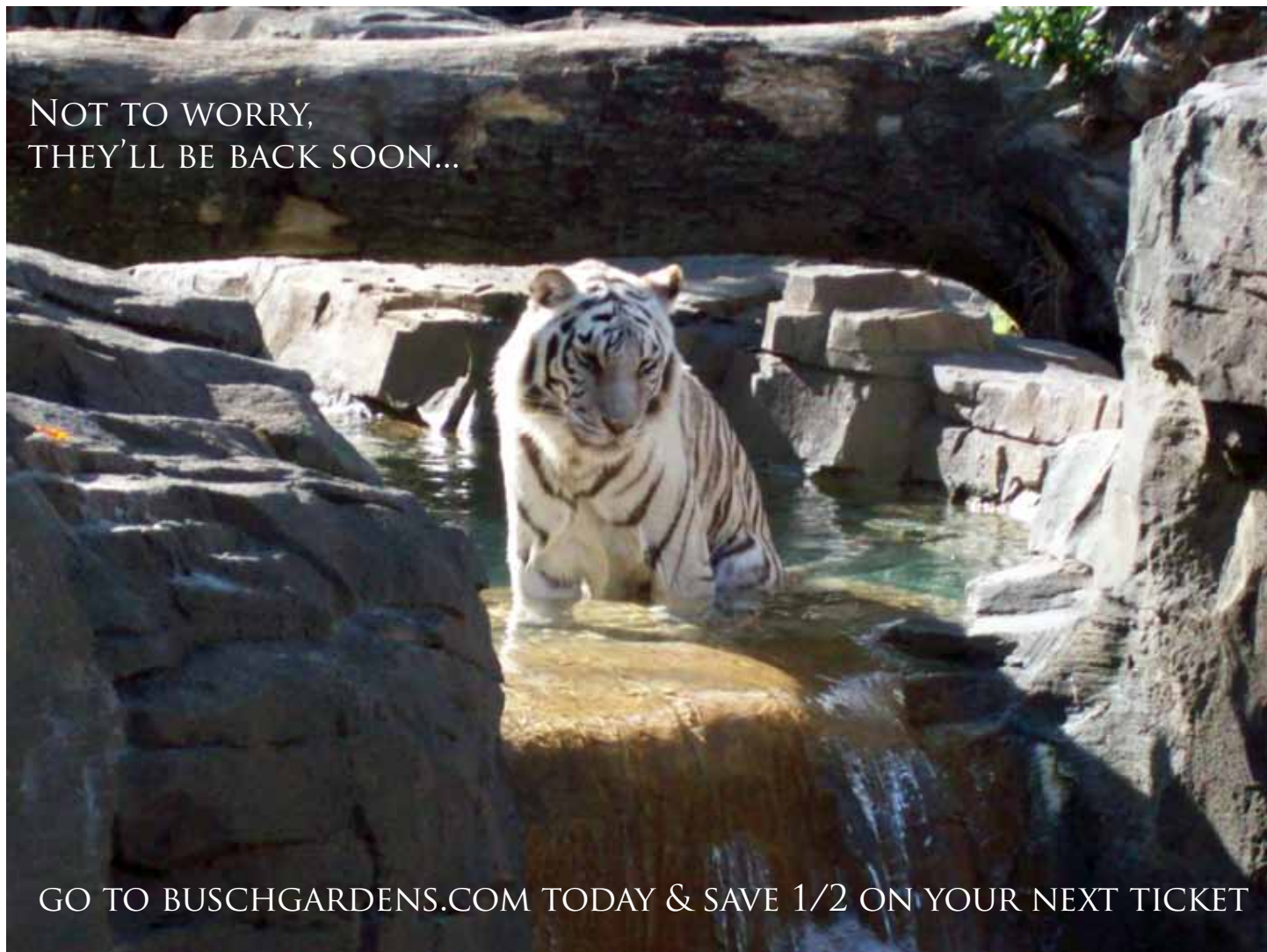


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Photo: Noah Downes

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### ONLINE POLL:

IF YOU WON THE LOTTO TOMORROW, WHICH PLACE WOULD YOU VISIT?

- A. DISNEYWORLD
- B. CRUISE TO THE BAHAMAS
- C. IRELAND
- D. NEW ZEALAND
- E. OTHER