



Amelia Island
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PICK AN UP-AND-COMING SPOT

AMELIA ISLAND, FLA.

A destination that's popular with nearby residents but isn't well known among out-of-staters is likely to have plentiful promotions. Take Amelia Island on Florida's East Coast, 30 miles north of Jacksonville. "We're expanding our market to become a national destination," says Amelia Island con-

vention and visitors' bureau president Gil Langley. Recently you could get a "free night, any night" deal that offered an extra night at no charge with two- or three-night minimum stays at 18 properties, from B&Bs to high-end condos (check AmeliaIsland.com for current deals).

WHY GO:

Unlike overrun Florida locales such as Miami Beach and Key West, Amelia Island's beaches offer solitude, framed by

spectacular sand dunes up to 40 feet high. Golf on one of several championship-level courses, take a boat tour to see historic ruins and wildlife, or stroll Centre Street in the downtown historic district to check out its abundant artists' shops and galleries.

SAMPLE DEAL:

A stay at the three-star Residence Inn starts at \$135 a night in March, vs. \$252 for the three-star Hyatt Sunset Harbor Resort in Key West. Flights from Houston are \$238 early in that month. **M**



Horseback riding on one of Amelia Island's uncrowded beaches