

LAKE  CITY
FLORIDA'S SPRINGLANDS

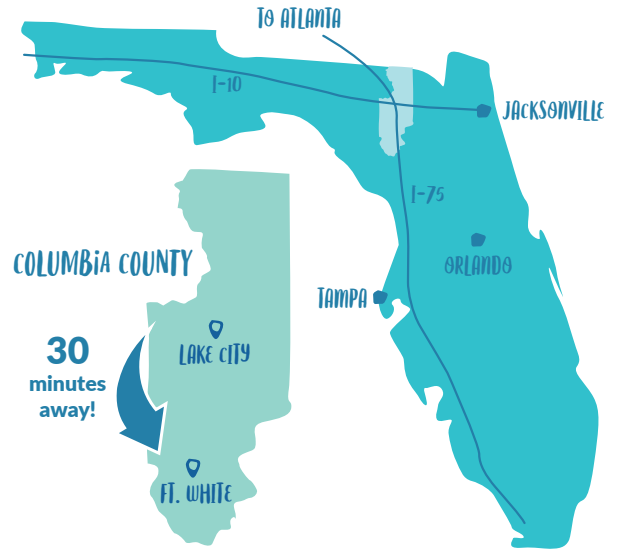
LAKEcityFL.com

IF THIS IS YOUR KIND OF
DESTINATION,
THIS IS YOUR KIND OF
VISITOR GUIDE.



EXPLORE LAKE CITY

Tucked nicely between I-10 and I-75, Lake City is a breeze to get to from any direction! And while you're here, give the historic town of Ft. White a visit. Named after a military fort built in the 1830s, it's an easy day trip!



FAST FACTS!
 Jacksonville - 1 hour
 Orlando - 2 hours
 Tampa - 2.5 hours
 Atlanta - 4 hours





WELCOME!

OUR NATURALLY BLESSED
WONDERLAND AWAITS!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 EXPLORE LAKE CITY

4 ABOUT FLORIDA'S SPRINGLANDS

7 THINGS TO SEE AND DO

- Springs And Lakes
- Activities And Attractions
- Cultural Attractions
- Parks And Outdoors
- Places To Eat
- Shopping

24 WHERE TO STAY

26 EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

- Signature Events

28 WEDDINGS AND GROUPS

30 SPORTS AND RECREATION

32 PLAN YOUR TRIP



ABOUT FLORIDA'S SPRINGLANDS

With sun-kissed blue skies, luscious green forests, majestic lakes, and – true to its name – crystal-clear freshwater springs, Florida's Springlands offers a kaleidoscope of experiences for everyone. And that's especially true for lovers of the outdoors. Visitors flock to Florida's Springlands to hike, bike, paddle, fish, tube down lazy rivers, and float and play in comfortably crisp water – all while basking in the natural surroundings and year-round gorgeous weather.

FUN FACT!

Did you know our springs stay 72 degrees year round? The water is so refreshing in the summer months.





THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Whether you're constantly on the go or more inclined to relax and soak it all in, there's no end to the great times you can have in Florida's Springlands. It starts, of course, with our springs, natural marvels that feed into lazy rivers lined with moss-draped trees. Visitors from all over come to play in our refreshing waters. But that just skims the surface.

In Lake City's historic downtown, drop into funky boutiques, enjoy a tasty meal and a craft beer, or simply sit on a bench and gaze out over a beautiful lake. Culture and history buffs will find museums, heritage markers, and eclectic architecture befitting a town known as the Gateway to Florida.

Take a deeper dive in the upcoming pages.



FAST FACT!

Lake City was originally called Alligator Town before its 1859 incorporation, population 131.



THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Springs And Lakes

Our springs glimmer brilliant blues and greens from the surface and are so clear that you can easily see the bottom. Gurgling from limestone aquifers, the water may feel chilly at first, but it's invigorating once you get used to it—especially in the summertime.

It's not called Lake City for nothing. Four gorgeous lakes within its boundaries provide lovely, convenient detours into natural Florida — perfect places to walk, jog, bike, paddle, see the sights and, of course, exhale and relax.

Here's a closer look at the springs and lakes in Florida's Springlands.



Ichetucknee Springs State Park

Folks come from far and wide to our most famous park, a 2,670-acre jewel that includes eight major springs that run into the six-mile Ichetucknee River. Flowing at a leisurely one mile per hour, the river is ideal for tubing and paddling. The park also includes nature trails, long boardwalks and a campground.



THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Springs And Lakes

Rum Island Spring and Park

At this lovely park named after moonshine stills hidden during the early 1900s, fresh spring water bubbles up to form a gorgeous swimming hole. Swim, snorkel, splash – or paddle down the winding Santa Fe River.

Lake DeSoto

Located in the heart of Historic Downtown Lake City, this 22-acre, oval-shaped lake is the ideal spot to take a walk on the path that surrounds it, relax on a bench or lay out a picnic spread. People also enjoy fishing from the shoreline. Adjacent Wilson Park is home to the Lake DeSoto Farmer's Market.

Lake Isabella

Walk 10 minutes south of Lake DeSoto and you'll find this serene spot in the midst of a historic Lake City residential district. An ample wooded area has unpaved paths. Benches sit under moss-draped trees. Pure bliss.

FUN FACT!

You can spot wildlife like beavers, otters, gars, softshell turtles, wild turkeys, wood ducks, and limpkins at our natural attractions.



Architecture lovers should stroll the Lake Isabella Historic Residential District, where roughly 30 walkable blocks feature 146 historic buildings, including the Lake City-Columbia County Historical Museum.

THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Springs And Lakes

Alligator Lake Park

This thousand-acre haven of serenity is a couple of miles southeast of downtown Lake City. You'll experience untamed north Florida nature as you explore 12 miles of hiking and biking trails, stroll boardwalks, or lounge at a picnic pavilion. It's also an excellent spot for birding. With several boat launches, Alligator Lake welcomes paddle craft and small motorboats.

Lake Montgomery

Less than a mile south of downtown Lake City, this freshwater lake, surrounded by lush green space, is known as a great place for fishing, kayaking and canoeing. A boat ramp provides easy access to the water. A nature walk and a pier enhance the experience.

Watertown Lake

Set across 46 scenic acres, Watertown Lake is home to bass, bluegill, and other local fish species. With a boat ramp, nearby parking, and opportunities to spot wildlife, it's a favorite for fishing or a peaceful day by the water.

Florida's Springlands prides itself on being family friendly and affordable. A small admission fee is required to enter the springs, while the lakes are free to access.

THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Activities And Attractions

In Florida's Springlands, we're proud that our attractions are nature-made. A visit here usually begins and ends with springs, lakes, and rivers, but there are plenty of other fun activities and adventures waiting in between.

You can bask in the sight and sound of a natural waterfall before heading out for a round of golf or disc golf. Meanwhile, hikers and bikers will delight in dozens of miles of trails, havens of peace and quiet surrounded by gorgeous scenery. Two-wheel daredevils can even take on mountain-biking trails. There are playgrounds to keep the kids entertained, and tennis and pickleball courts for the grownups.



Florida's Springlands is a terrific place for boating – from paddleboards to kayaks and canoes to motorboats (if they're not too big). All of our parks and lakes have ramps for easy access.



THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Cultural Attractions

It's not just about the water in Florida's Springlands. There's plenty of culture and history to take in. Here are a few must-see places: The Lake City-Columbia County Historical Museum tells our local history within the walls of an 1870s-era Victorian house just south of downtown. The Blanche is the landmark boutique hotel in downtown Lake City. Built in 1902 and renovated in the late 2010s, it's the height of Southern luxury. The Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park celebrates the man who wrote such early American pop songs as *Camptown Races* and *Oh! Susanna*. Encompassing 900 acres, the park features a museum with exhibits about Foster's life and tunes, as well as a 97-bell carillon tower that houses the world's largest tubular bell instrument. It chimes Foster tunes into the park all day.



The Lake City-Columbia County Historical Museum features rooms filled with artifacts, photographs, and memorabilia that offer a closer look at Columbia County's people, traditions, and early days.



THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Parks And Outdoors

Florida's Springlands has more outdoor places to explore than our renowned springs and lakes. O'Leno State Park and River Rise Preserve State Park — sprawling more than a thousand acres — is full of raw green space and mile after mile of hiking trails. Both parks are located on the spring-fed Santa Fe River. You'll find plenty of places to launch a kayak or canoe for a trip on the river. Forty miles north on the Suwannee River lies Big Shoals State Park. Adventurous kayakers take note: Big Shoals boasts the only Class III (intermediate) whitewater rapids in Florida. Lake City-Columbia County also offers an array of smaller community parks with playgrounds and activities for your family to enjoy.



In one of the more remarkable geological features you'll find in Florida's Springlands, the Santa Fe River disappears into a sinkhole in O'Leno State Park, then three miles later, it resurfaces into River Rise Preserve State Park. You could say that the two parks are deeply connected.





THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Places To Eat

Long days of outdoor fun are bound to make you hungry. And Florida's Springlands stands ready to feed you. Lake City offers an eclectic array of restaurants that will please any palate. You'll find mostly casual dining, with cuisine that includes seafood, steaks, burgers, pizza, pub fare, Cuban, Asian, and more. Because we're just south of the Georgia line, it's fair to say that Southern comfort food is our sweet spot — a couple of all-you-can-eat buffets are perfect for folks with big appetites. Several coffee shops and breakfast spots will get you fueled up for the day. Florida's Springlands also includes all the popular fast-food brands. Wherever you eat, rest assured that you won't wince when the check comes.



Looking to try some of Lake City's unique delicacies? Choose between grass-fed elk burgers, craft beer brewed right here in town, or made-from-scratch baked items.



THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Shopping

Florida's Springlands may not have a Neiman Marcus or a Gucci store, but we do offer a delightful assortment of far less expensive alternatives. Downtown Lake City features a small cluster of cute boutiques, galleries, gift shops, and antique consignment stores. They're all within easy walking distance, so you can pop in and pop out as you poke around for that special find. Lake City Flea Market is open on weekends for people looking for one-of-a-kind items to go along with some down-home fun. There's also the indoor Lake City Mall and big box stores — just in case you left your towel at home or need some more sunscreen!



Outside of shopping, make your own candle, take a painting class, and check out art exhibits in downtown Lake City!



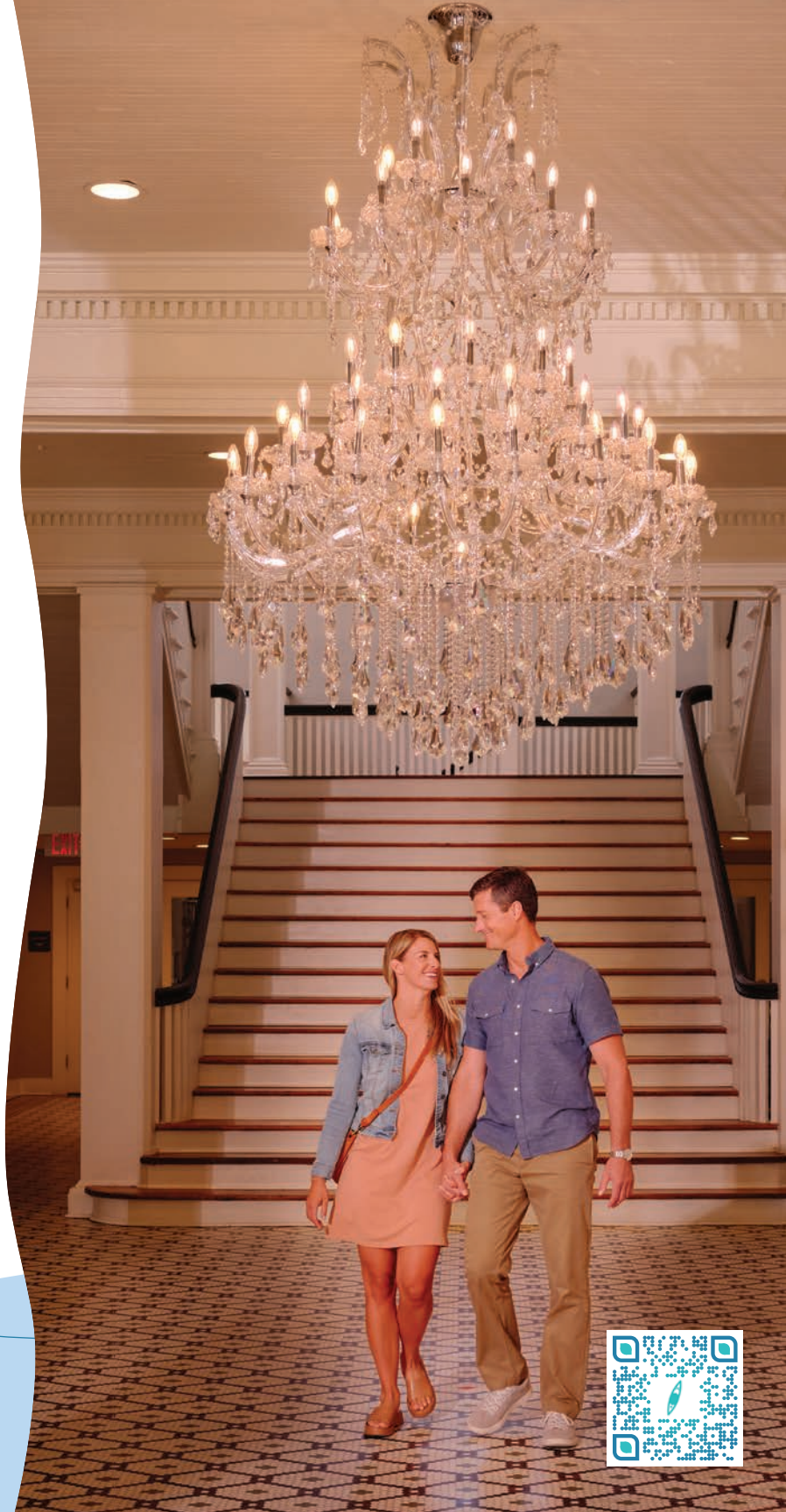
WHERE TO STAY

You're bound to expend a lot of energy during a day of watery fun in Florida's Springlands. That's why it's important to have a cozy place to stay and get a restful night's sleep! You can find several brand-name hotels near the intersection of I-75 and U.S. 90 in Lake City, just a half-hour's drive to two of our most popular springs – Ichetucknee and Rum Island.

For a more boutique stay, The Blanche, located in downtown Lake City, has 14 beautifully appointed guest rooms.



Traveling by camper? Florida's Springlands features many RV parks, plus campgrounds for a more rustic stay closer to nature.



EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

Signature Events

From street festivals to barbecue cook-offs to county fairs to rodeos, Florida's Springlands offers an exciting array of annual events that you just may want to mark your calendar for.

Here's a rundown:



FEBRUARY
Sweets in
the Streets



FEBRUARY
Olustee Festival



MARCH
Florida Gateway
Pro Rodeo



APRIL
Downtown Showdown
BBQ Cookoff



MAY
Spring Market/
Multicultural Festival



JULY
Annual Fourth of
July Celebration



SEPTEMBER
Off R Rocker Rodeo



OCTOBER
Florida Gateway Fair



DECEMBER
Christmas in Columbia Holiday Market



WEDDINGS AND GROUPS

Florida's Springlands is the perfect place for your dream destination wedding, whether it's within the classy confines of a boutique hotel, a specially outfitted barn, or in the great wide open amid lush green space. You can go big and opulent or small and intimate—whatever makes your wedding day more personal and memorable.



We know that planning a wedding can be tricky. Lake City has several planners and decorators who will handle logistics and vendor coordination to help make your special day as special as you deserve.

Plan your dream wedding in Lake City/ Florida's Springlands. Please contact the Columbia County Tourism Development Council at (386) 758-1312 for information on how to plan your wedding here.



SPORTS AND RECREATION

With two sports complexes outfitted with natural-grass fields and top-notch amenities, Florida's Springlands is a great place to hold weekend tournaments, youth league championships, and other events. Participants and spectators alike are sure to have a terrific experience.



Southside Sports Complex

This 146-acre venue features 30 fields for baseball, softball, and other sports, plus eight concession stands, covered bleachers, three playgrounds, and a fitness trail.



South Columbia Sports Complex

Discover eight fields for softball, baseball, and soccer, two tennis courts, two outdoor basketball courts, and a playground.

Plan your next tournament or sports event in Florida's Springlands. For information, please contact the Columbia County Sports Commission at (386) 719-1453.

@columbiasports

f columbiacountysportscommission



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PLAN YOUR TRIP

Columbia County TDC

The Columbia County Tourist Development Council (TDC), also known as Visit Lake City - Florida's Springlands, works with our tourism partners to promote our local hotels, restaurants, attractions, events, and things to do to show visitors everything there is to enjoy in this special part of the great state of Florida.

Distance from Lake City to:

Gainesville, FL - 46 miles
Jacksonville, FL - 60 miles
Valdosta, GA - 62 miles
Tallahassee, FL - 106 miles
Orlando, FL - 154 miles
Tampa, FL - 172 miles
Atlanta, GA - 287 miles
Pensacola, FL - 299 miles
Miami, FL - 378 miles

Car Travel:

From I-75 North Bound, travel North to Exit 427
From I-75 South Bound, travel South to Exit 427
From I-10 West Bound, travel West to Exit 303
From I-10 East Bound, take Exit 296A to merge onto I-75 S, Travel South to Exit 427

Airline Travel:

Lake City Gateway Airport (LCQ)

Airport supports corporate business jet and charter

Gainesville Regional Airport (GNV)

47 miles via I-75 to Lake City

Valdosta Regional Airport (VLD)

60 miles via I-75 to Lake City

Jacksonville International Airport (JAX)

69 miles via I-10 to Lake City

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PLAN YOUR TRIP

Average Monthly Temperatures in Lake City

January.....	64°/41°
February.....	68°/45°
March.....	75°/50°
April.....	80°/55°
May.....	86°/62°
June.....	90°/69°
July.....	91°/71°
August.....	91°/71°
September.....	87°/68°
October.....	81°/59°
November.....	73°/51°
December.....	67°/45°



Lake City's climate is ideal for spending time outdoors year-round, thanks to long stretches of warm weather and winters that stay comfortably mild.







We hope to see you soon in Florida's Springlands, where the springwater's always 72 degrees, and the hospitality is laid-back Southern-style.



Connect With Us

There's always something going on around here! Follow us to stay up to date with the latest happenings.

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GEORGIA STATE LINE
FLORIDA STATE LINE

COLUMBIA COUNTY



OSCEOLA NATIONAL FOREST

441

41

90

100

47

41

27

CR 138

STEPHEN FOSTER FOLK CULTURE CENTER STATE PARK
BIG SHOALS STATE PARK



FALLING CREEK FALLS



HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

FALLING CREEK FALLS

LAKE CITY

LAKE MONTGOMERY

LAKE DESOTO

LAKE ISABELLA

WATERTOWN LAKE

BAYA DR

FLORIDA GATEWAY FAIRGROUNDS & PRO RODEO ARENA

SOUTHSIDE SPORTS COMPLEX

LAKE CITY GATEWAY AIRPORT (LCQ)

ALLIGATOR LAKE PARK

NORTH FLORIDA SPEEDWAY



ALLIGATOR LAKE PARK



ICHETUCKNEE SPRINGS STATE PARK

O'LENO STATE PARK & RIVER RISE PRESERVE



O'LENO STATE PARK

NORTH ENTRANCE

SOUTH ENTRANCE

ICHETUCKNEE SPRINGS STATE PARK



FORT WHITE

ALL-TECH RACEWAY

SOUTH COLUMBIA SPORTS COMPLEX

FORT WHITE



RUM ISLAND PARK

SUWANNEE RIVER

SANTA FE RIVER

ICHETUCKNEE RIVER

RUM CHURCH RD



A FINAL FUN FACT

Perfectly positioned at the intersection of I-75 and I-10 and just south of the Florida-Georgia line, Lake City has proudly been known as the Gateway to Florida for nearly 200 years, welcoming travelers as they begin their journey through the Sunshine State.

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