



48 HOURS IN

St. Augustine

SLOW DOWN · STAY AWHILE

WELCOME

Welcome to St. Augustine.

St. Augustine has been continuously occupied since 1565, when the Spanish admiral Pedro Menéndez de Avilés founded it 42 years before Jamestown and 55 before Plymouth — it is the oldest European-established city in the continental United States, and it wears that age plainly. Coquina—stone walls, narrow colonial lanes, and a 17th-century fort still standing at the harbor's edge make the historic district feel less like a preserved museum piece and more like a place that simply never stopped being lived in.

What most first-time visitors miss: St. Augustine isn't only Spanish colonial history. Henry Flagler arrived in the 1880s and built a second city on top of the first — Gilded Age hotels with Tiffany glass and Moorish domes that launched Florida as an American vacation destination. And the town's Minorcan heritage, dating to a 1777 immigration from a failed colony at New Smyrna, gave the city its own distinct food tradition built around the fiery, citrusy datil pepper.

St. Augustine is well suited to solo travel — the historic district is compact and entirely walkable, bar-counter dining is the norm at its best restaurants, and a town this old and this small makes striking up conversation with a bartender or a fellow walker the path of least resistance rather than an effort.

Day One · Castillo de San Marcos · Historic District · St. George Street

8:00 AM Breakfast: The Present Moment Cafe

224 W King Street: an easygoing counter-order cafe serving hearty vegetarian-friendly breakfasts and strong coffee just outside the old city gates. \$10–15.

Insider Tip: Order at the counter and take a table on the small patio — a relaxed, unhurried start before the historic district gets busy.

9:00 AM Castillo de San Marcos

1 South Castillo Drive: the oldest masonry fort in the continental United States, begun by the Spanish in 1695 from coquina — a soft local shellstone that famously absorbed cannonballs rather than shattering. Admission \$15.

Insider Tip: Walk the full circuit of the gun deck for harbor views in every direction, and read a few of the interior room placards — the fort's 300-plus years under five flags is easy to skim past otherwise.

11:00 AM St. George Street & the City Gates

The pedestrian spine of the historic district, running from the old city gates south past colonial-era buildings, shops, and the Colonial Quarter living history museum. Free to walk.

Insider Tip: Turn off St. George onto quieter side lanes like Aviles Street — the oldest street in the city, and a fraction of the foot traffic.

12:30 PM

Lunch: Preserved

102 Bridge Street: seasonal Southern cooking with a strong drink program, in a quiet room a few blocks off the main tourist path. \$18–30, bar seating available.

Insider Tip: The bar seats fast even at peak lunch hours and gets you full attention from the bartenders — a genuinely easy solo lunch.

2:00 PM

Flagler College & the Lightner Museum

74 King Street and 75 King Street: Henry Flagler's 1888 Hotel Ponce de León, now a working college with free-to-view Tiffany stained glass in its dining hall, sits directly across from the Lightner Museum, housed in his former Hotel Alcazar. Museum admission \$18.

Insider Tip: Flagler College runs short public tours of the Ponce de León's rotunda and dining hall on a set daily schedule — check the times posted at the entrance before assuming you can just walk in.

4:30 PM

Aviles Street & Cathedral Basilica

St. Augustine's oldest street, lined with galleries and small museums, leading to the Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine on the Plaza de la Constitución — the oldest Catholic parish in the country. Free.

Insider Tip: The Plaza de la Constitución at this hour is a good place to just sit for ten minutes and watch the town go by before dinner.

7:00 PM

Dinner: Collage

60 Hypolita Street: globally inflected fine dining in a converted 1888 building — one of the historic district's most consistently well-regarded restaurants. \$40–65.

Insider Tip: Ask for a seat at the small bar if you want the full menu without a reservation — it's the easiest solo entry point to one of the town's best kitchens.

Day Two · St. Augustine Lighthouse · Beaches · Ghosts After Dark

9:00 AM

St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum

81 Lighthouse Avenue, Anastasia Island: an 1874 brick lighthouse with 219 steps to a panoramic view over the city, inlet, and Atlantic. Admission \$17.95.

Insider Tip: Climb early before the day heats up — the tower has no elevator and no shade, and the view is best in clear morning light.

11:00 AM

Anastasia State Park

1340A A1A South: 1,600 acres of undeveloped Atlantic beach, dunes, and maritime hammock just across the bridge from downtown. Entry \$8 per vehicle.

Insider Tip: The park's northern end tends to be quieter than the main beach access — worth the extra five-minute walk for solo beach time.

1:00 PM Lunch: The Floridian

72 Spanish Street: Southern cooking with genuinely good vegetarian and vegan options, in a bright, unpretentious room. \$14–22.

Insider Tip: The fried green tomato BLT is the well-known order, but ask what's fresh that day — the menu shifts with what's local.

2:30 PM Fountain of Youth Archaeological Park

11 Magnolia Avenue: the site traditionally linked to Ponce de León's 1513 landing, now a low-key archaeological park with excavated foundations of the earliest Spanish settlement and a working spring house. Admission \$22.

Insider Tip: Treat the spring water sample as the novelty it is, not the reason to visit — the archaeological exhibits on the original 1565 settlement are the actual substance here.

4:30 PM Bridge of Lions & Bayfront

The 1927 Mediterranean Revival bridge connecting downtown to Anastasia Island, with a walkable bayfront promenade on the mainland side. Free.

Insider Tip: Walk out onto the bridge on foot at golden hour for the classic postcard view back toward the Castillo and the old city skyline.

7:00 PM Dinner: Ice Plant

110 Riberia Street: a craft cocktail bar and restaurant inside a converted 1927 ice manufacturing plant, with house-made ice programs and a solid raw bar. \$16–35, bar seating.

Insider Tip: Sit at the bar and ask about the house ice program — it's a genuine point of pride here and makes for easy bartender conversation.

9:00 PM Ghosts & Gravestones Walking Tour

Departs from the historic district: St. Augustine leans hard into its reputation as one of the most haunted cities in America, and an evening walking tour through the old streets and cemeteries is a low-key, sociable way to close a solo night out. Tickets vary, typically \$20–30.

Insider Tip: Small-group walking tours (rather than trolley versions) put you shoulder to shoulder with other travelers — an easy, built-in way to end the night in conversation if you want it.

WHERE TO EAT

St. Augustine's Table

HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Present Moment Cafe

HISTORIC DISTRICT · \$

Easygoing vegetarian-friendly breakfast counter just outside the city gates.

Collage

HISTORIC DISTRICT · \$\$\$

One of the town's best-regarded kitchens — ask for the bar to skip reserving ahead.

Preserved

HISTORIC DISTRICT · \$\$

Seasonal Southern cooking off the main tourist path, with fast, attentive bar seating.

Odd Birds

HISTORIC DISTRICT · \$\$

A bright, plant-filled bar and cafe with a strong cocktail list and easy solo seating.

ANASTASIA ISLAND & BAYFRONT

Ice Plant

RIBERIA STREET · \$\$

Craft cocktails and a raw bar inside a converted 1927 ice factory.

The Floridian

SPANISH STREET · \$\$

Southern cooking with genuinely good vegetarian options.

Prohibition Kitchen

ST. GEORGE STREET · \$\$

A speakeasy-styled gastropub built into a 1908 building on the main pedestrian street.

BARS & CAFES

Cellar 6 Wine Bar

AVILES STREET · \$\$

A quiet, low-lit wine bar down the town's oldest street — a good solo nightcap.

The Kookaburra

DOWNTOWN · \$

Australian-style coffee and meat pies for a fast, easy breakfast stop.

Meehan's Irish Pub

RIVERFRONT · \$\$

A riverside Irish pub with live music most nights — sociable and low-key.

GETTING AROUND

Navigating St. Augustine

MODE	COST	NOTES
Walking	Free	The historic district is compact and flat — nearly everything on Day One is walkable.

Old Town Trolley	~\$35/day	Hop-on-hop-off narrated trolley covering the historic district and key sights.
Uber / Lyft	Varies	Best for Anastasia Island, the lighthouse, and beach access.
Rental car	\$45–65/day	Useful for Vilano Beach, Ponte Vedra, or exploring beyond the historic core.
Bike rental	\$20–30/day	The historic district and Anastasia Island are both easy, flat cycling.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

TOPIC	DETAILS
Getting There	Jacksonville International Airport (JAX) is about 45 minutes north; Uber runs \$60–80, or rent a car at the airport.
Best Time	March–May and October–November bring warm days and thinner crowds; summer is hot and humid with afternoon storms, and the historic district's coquina streets hold heat.
Solo Dining	Bar seating is the norm at the town's best restaurants, and the compact scale makes casual conversation with staff and fellow travelers easy.
Reservations	Book dinner at Collage or Preserved ahead on weekends; walk-in bar seats are usually available even when the dining room is full.
Sun & Heat	There is little shade in the historic district and on the fort's gun deck — sunscreen and water matter even on a mild-feeling day.
Useful Apps	Uber, the Old Town Trolley app for stop times, and a tide chart if you plan on the beaches.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE: FINAL CHECKLIST

- ☐ Book the Ghosts & Gravestones or similar evening tour ahead on weekends
- ☐ Wear real walking shoes — historic district streets are coquina and brick, not flat pavement
- ☐ Bring sunscreen and water even on a mild day — there is little shade downtown
- ☐ Reserve dinner at Collage or Preserved ahead on weekends
- ☐ Check Flagler College's public tour schedule before assuming walk-in access
- ☐ Carry a light rain layer in summer for afternoon storms
- ☐ Bring cash for smaller shops on St. George and Aviles Streets

GoingSolo.Life

Your interactive map is one scan away.

All locations from this guide, colour-coded by day, open on your phone.



goingsolo.life/maps/st-augustine

TRAVEL ALONE. LIVE FULLY.

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