

Tampa Gone Wild



VISUAL TRAVEL TOURS

Maps Show You Where... We Show You Why!

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Tour Summary

Wildlife attractions are some of the key reasons that Tampa is a vacation mecca. Busch Gardens is the city's most visited site, and we will start there. Then we continue on to explore the less-known but equally fun Lowry Park Zoo and Big Cat Rescue. And what better way to end the tour than at one of the five most kid-friendly aquariums in the country? Go wild and join us for a ROARING good time!

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Introduction





Tampa is a vacation mecca for many reasons, but some of the main tourist lures are its wildlife attractions. Busch Gardens started as a tiny free site featuring just birds and beer. Evidently that was a pretty good combination, since today it is Tampa's number one visitor hot spot.



We'll be going there to see all the natural beauty and wildlife it has to offer, even though it is equally well known for its top-ranking roller-coasters. And what a lot of wildlife there is to see! It is one of the largest zoos in North America, and home to more than 30 threatened and endangered species.



Busch Gardens is known for beer, and we'll visit some magnificent Clydesdales that are always associated with the Busch brewery.



Then we'll plunge into 19th-century Africa, starting at Myombe Reserve, home of some fun-loving primates, move to Jambo Junction, home of Busch Gardens' ambassadors, and on to the Edge of Africa and the Serengeti Plain, filled with the continent's wildlife. Next stop is Jungala, the newest attraction. We'll end this segment with another original, the colorful and flowery Bird Gardens.



Another way to "visit" Africa as well as Australia, Asia, and some other fun places by way of their wildlife, is Lowry Park Zoo. In fact one of its most majestic animals comes from right here in Florida. You will meet Lucy, the zoo's resident Florida panther, and learn her "heartbreak to happiness" story.



If you are a fan of Animal Planet's "Meerkat Manor" you will thrill to the zoo's meerkat habitat. The zoo is filled with more than 2,000 animals from all over the world. It does such a good job that Parents

Magazine voted it the number one zoo for kids in 2009 - but grownups will love it too.



Whether your favorite is a tiny bird like the lorikeet, the giant African elephant, or anything in between, you will find it here. We'll tour by foot, train, and sky ride to cover it all.



We'll travel down a small dirt path called Easy Street to find a wildlife treasure, one of the world's best and biggest sanctuaries for lions, tigers, bobcats, and other rare species of big cat. Big Cat Rescue takes in many of the unwanted, abused, or neglected exotic cats that are rescued from deplorable situations.



There are over 100 exotic cats at Big Cat Rescue. Some are extremely rare, like the two white serval cats that are the only known specimens in existence. Others are more common but still beautiful.



We will visit all of these wonderful animals, such as tigers, snow leopards, ocelots, Geoffrey cats, jungle cats, bobcats, cougars, lynx, servals, caracals and lions, to learn some of their stories.



In Florida, water fun is always near the top of everyone's agenda, so our last stop is Florida Aquarium. It rates in the top five "kid-friendly" aquariums due to its many interactive activities. Here the focus is on Florida's unique water systems, tracking a "drop" of water from its underground source to the open sea.



We will follow this drop of water from Wetlands Gallery into the estuaries found near Bays and Beaches. We will look at the interesting creatures found in Bay Bottoms and even the new types of habitat that man is responsible for creating, like a traffic bridge. From the Beaches we will follow it into the exotic Coral Reef.



The aquarium's newest gallery, Ocean Commotion, offers close encounters with some of the most amazing animals found in our oceans. Shark Bay has five different species of sharks from around the world. Much more than just an aquarium, this is also an aviary and botanical garden. Wildlife abounds and that's where the focus will be in this tour, the wildlife.

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