





# Daytona Beach

Race down to speed capital Daytona Beach for some great-value driving – on its golf courses

The quaintly named Ocean Hammock: watch out for 'The Bear's Claw'



**T**hink of Daytona Beach and you might not, perhaps, bring golf to mind first of all. Chances are you would think of motor racing. Daytona International Speedway, unofficially dubbed the "World Centre of Racing", is home to racing events such as the world-famous Daytona 500.

Then there's the beach itself, of course. Equally famous, for its surfing and the fact that you can drive on it.

But this East Coast Florida beach destination also has driving of a rather different sort. Well over a dozen championship-standard courses dot the city and its environs, sporting the handiwork of Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Donald Ross, Rees Jones, Gary Player and Arthur Hills among others.

It's also great value. Green fees are among the lowest anywhere in Florida, so playing a few rounds during your holiday won't break the bank or put you in the doghouse.

Golf Daytona Beach is an alliance of area hotels and courses, offering visitors packages which allow them to combine a stay in the city with the opportunity to play some of its top golfing facilities as well as visiting the area's many attractions.

Daytona's golfing reputation was boosted in 1989, when the Ladies Professional Golf Association relocated its headquarters there from Houston, Texas, in part for the resort's year-round, golf-friendly climate.

Its home is the LPGA International, a huge complex with an extensive golf academy and double-end driving range, not to mention two designer-label courses – the Champions Course, crafted by Rees Jones in 1994, and the Legends, by Arthur Hills, which followed four years later.

One US women's golf magazine cites Champions as America's most women-friendly course. It can be played from 7,088 yards off



**Matanzas Woods: "Beautiful Monster"**

the back to 5,131 off red. But this is no girly set-up. Trust me. There are strong echoes of a Scottish links but in a Florida setting, testing you throughout with strategic mounding, marshes, cavernous bunkers and numerous lakes. Including one right in front of the first tee which gobbled up both my attempted drives – to derisive cries of "where's your handbag, Mildred?" from the gallery of fellow participants in a supposedly-friendly tournament. I nearly smudged my mascara. . .

Water also factors on more than half of the Legends, a shade shorter than its sister but with tighter, tree-lined fairways and rolling greens. These are two tough dames, but as with any woman a thoughtful approach with unhurried, well-placed strokes pays off handsomely!

Just across Florida's north-south coastal artery, Interstate 95, is Indigo Lakes Golf Club. This is the nearest 18-hole course to the Speedway, and when the NASCAR stock cars are in town you can hear the mighty roar of their engines as they thunder round the tri-oval circuit, especially on some of the closer holes. Don't let it put you off this excellent Lloyd Clifton creation, however. The sound of raw power unleashed might even lift your game.⇒



**LPGA International, Champions Course: the most women-friendly club on Earth?**

PETER ELLEGARD

## WHERE TO PLAY

### Daytona Beach Golf Club

North Course: 6,338 yards, par 72  
South Course: 6,228 yards, par 72  
\$25-\$45

**Contact:** 00-1-386-671-3500  
daytonabeachgolfclub.com  
*The master's original South is the mellow of these but approach with care.*

### Matanzas Woods Golf Club

6,929 yards, par 72  
\$70-\$85

**Contact:** 00-1-386-446-6330  
golfpalmcoast.com/courses.htm  
*You're bound to fall for the charms of this beautiful monster.*

### LPGA International

Champions Course: 7,088 yards, par 72  
Legends Course: 6,984 yards, par 72  
\$50-\$75, carts \$25

**Contact:** 00-1-386-274-LPGA  
lpgainternational.com  
*There's nothing like these two tough dames to test your machismo.*

### Ocean Hammock Golf Club

7,201 yards, par 72  
\$195-\$265

**Contact:** 00-1-386-447-4612  
oceanhammock.com  
*Parting swipe from Jack's oceanside stunner will leave lasting memories.*

### Victoria Hills Golf Club

6,989 yards, par 72  
\$55-\$95

**Contact:** 00-1-386-738-6000  
golfdaytonabeach.com  
*Carolinas-style golf for all handicaps among majestic woodlands and wetlands.*

## WHERE TO STAY

### Bahama House

**Contact:** 00-1-386-248-2001  
daytonabahamahouse.com

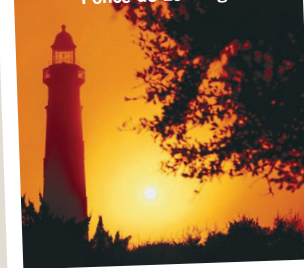
### Plaza Resort & Spa

**Contact:** 00-1-386-255-4471  
plazaresortandspa.com

### Hilton Daytona Beach Ocean Walk Village

**Contact:** 00-1-386-254-8200  
hilton.com

### Ponce de Leon lighthouse



PHOTOS: DAYTONA BEACH AREA CVB



Daytona Beach Golf Club is a slice of history going back to 1921. Its South Course is the original 18 holes designed by the legendary Donald Ross, and walking is allowed other than between November and April. Time has mellowed its challenge and there's ample room for tee shots without clattering into its guarding pines and oaks but approaches ask more searching questions. The North Course, a 1946 design later reworked by Lloyd Clifton, is the more demanding and brings more water and contoured greens into the equation.

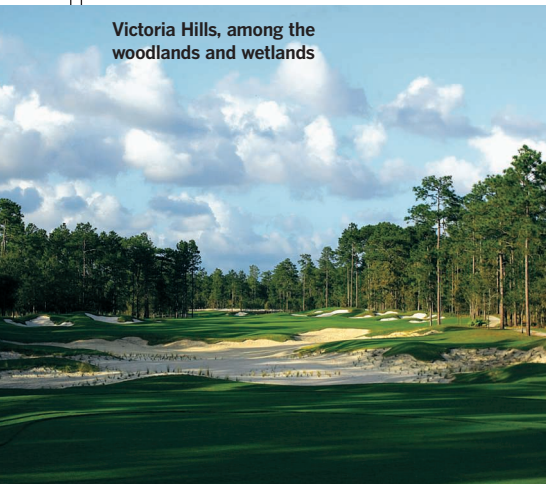
DeBary Golf & Country Club, off I4 towards Orlando, was home to the 2005 US Open qualifying finals and nestles among dense pine groves. On the way you pass the Ron Garl-designed Victoria Hills course, which opened to a fanfare of praise in 2002. Its fairways also weave through pines as well as tall oaks, spruced up by the addition of pot bunkers, waste bunkers and native wetland. Walking is allowed after 1pm.

North of Daytona, the Palm Coast offers 90 holes of top golf. Matanzas Woods is a majestic Arnold Palmer and Ed Seay collaboration. Nicknamed "a beautiful monster", its large green complexes are reached via rolling fairways set among stands of pine, oak, cypress and palm trees, several lakes and a waterway.

Six holes of stunning coastal layout Ocean Hammock are right by the beach and pounding surf, including the finishing four. Its creator, Jack Nicklaus, called the quartet "The Bear's Claw" and said they should be among golf's most memorable holes. From its tips, this beauty of a beast measures 7,201 yards and has a slope rating of 147. Throw in a gusty Atlantic wind and you could well walk off feeling mauled. You certainly won't forget that.

From its racing cars to wildlife including manatees and turtles and from high-energy nightclubs to Florida's tallest lighthouse, Daytona Beach has many other options for holidaymakers worth lingering over.

And if you don't know Daytona's golf, it's about time you discovered it.



Victoria Hills, among the woodlands and wetlands

Kennedy Space Centre



PETER ELLIARD

## Daytona Beach Facts

### WHERE IS IT

**Daytona Beach** is on the central East Coast of Florida and just an hour from Orlando, which has several direct flights a day from the UK. Connecting flights also operate to Daytona Beach International Airport from nearly 200 US cities including from Atlanta and Cincinnati with **Delta** (deltaairlines.co.uk; 0800-414767) and from Newark with **Continental** (continental.com/uk; 0845-60-767-60).

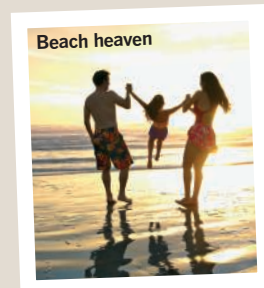
**Information:** daytonabeach.com,  
**Brochure line** 01737-643764;  
golfdaytonabeach.com, 00-1-800-544-0415.

### KEY ATTRACTIONS

- Feed the need for speed by watching races at three tracks including the **Daytona International Speedway**, home of the Daytona 500. You can also take to the track there with the Richard Petty Driving Experience at over 150mph.
- **Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse** is the tallest lighthouse in Florida and second-tallest in the US, and includes historical and nautical museum displays.
- The ruins of several plantation sites and sugar mills are testament to the once-flourishing industry

which ended when many were destroyed by the **Seminoles** in the Second Seminole Indian War, which ended in 1842.

- **Kennedy Space Centre** is 50 miles south of Daytona Beach at Cape Canaveral and makes a great day out. Nearby Cocoa Beach has Florida's best surfing and **Ron Jon's Surf Shop**, a 24-hour surfing superstore which attracts 2.5 million customers a year.



Beach heaven

### FAMILY ACTIVITIES

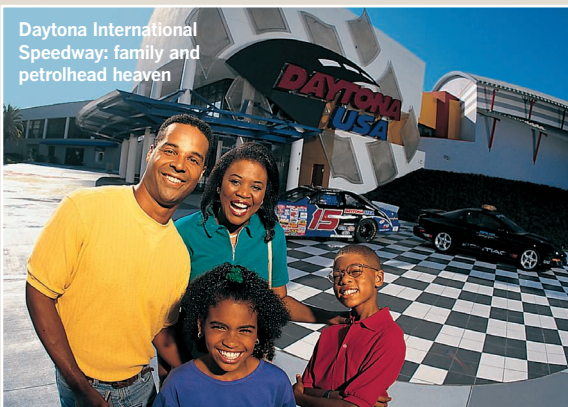
- **Daytona USA** is an interactive family motorsports attraction at the Daytona International Speedway with simulators, track tours, an IMAX 3D movie and pit stop challenge.
- **The Marine Science Centre** has interactive exhibits on conservation

and marine ecology. Or experience nature at first hand on a cruise along the St Johns River or seeing wintering manatees at Blue Spring State Park in Orange City.

- All the fun of the seaside is on offer on **Daytona Beach Boardwalk**, including traditional arcades and thrill rides, while Daytona Beach Pier is a short walk away.
- **New Smyrna Beach**, just south of Daytona Beach, has 13 miles of beaches ideal for children because of offshore rock ledges which protect against undercurrents.

### DAYTONA BEACH FACTS

- **Ormond Beach** became known as "The Birthplace of Speed" after time trials began on its hard sands. In the first sanctioned event, the Ormond Challenge Cup in 1903, Alexander Winston beat Ransom E Olds, father of the Oldsmobile.
- Speed attempts moved to Daytona Beach and British speed legend **Sir Malcolm Campbell** set the last world speed record on the beach, reaching 276.82mph in 1935 in Bluebird V. A clocktower stands on the boardwalk as a tribute.
- **NASCAR** (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) was born at a meeting in Daytona Beach in 1947, a beach race track opening in 1948. The Daytona International Speedway tri-oval was built in 1959 and ran the first Daytona 500 that year.
- One of the area's earliest golfers was oil magnate **John D Rockefeller**. He is said to have built his winter home, The Casements, in Ormond Beach because the hotel he was staying at charged him more than other guests.
- **Driving on beaches** is a local tradition going back to motoring's early years. Vehicles can drive on 16 of the area's 36 miles of beach during daylight hours, with a 10mph speed limit.



Daytona International Speedway: family and petrolhead heaven