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Tour the Fiesta Key KOA!

by Dennis Gaub, for KOA Kompass

Campers seeking a balmy escape in one of the country's most colorful and historic areas need look no farther than the Fiesta Key KOA Kampground perched at Florida's southern tip.

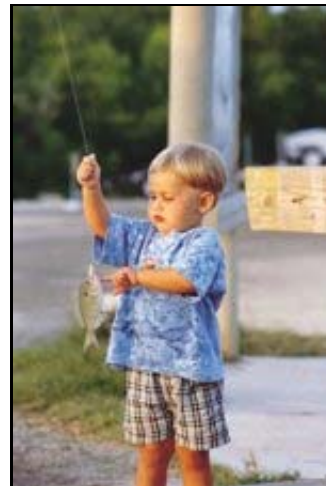
"It's a very private tropical island in the (Florida) Keys surrounded by warm Gulf waters," says Sara Harper, KOA's marketing representative.

Starting this spring, campers considering a stay at Fiesta Key can take a virtual tour of the campground via the Internet. Fiesta Key and another Florida campground, Okeechobee KOA, are the first two KOA Kampgrounds to offer virtual tours over the Web.

KOA is working with a national company to offer the virtual tours; company officials hope to make the feature available for other campgrounds in coming months. The tours at [Fiesta Key](#) and [Okeechobee](#) allow potential visitors to pan over RV sites, lodging facilities, swimming pools, recreational amenities and other camper services.

Fiesta Key visitors will find the sun always shining, so any time is good for a stay, Harper says. Still, bargain-minded campers can take advantage of off-season rates in the summer. The busiest time is November through March, when snowbirds from the Northeast and the Midwest flee winter. March and April also tend to be busy, bringing campers during spring break and Easter.

A pub, grill and convenience store are located on the Fiesta Key grounds. Guests can rent a boat from the marina, or take their own boat into the Gulf where deep-sea fishing awaits. Meanwhile, non-anglers can frolic in the freshwater swimming pool or hot tubs.



The campground has motel units on site for visitors who would rather stay in a room than use an RV site or a tent site.

Activities occur year-round at Fiesta Key. Upcoming events include the Mother's Day celebration featuring flowers and a breakfast special, May 11; the Memorial Day weekend Karaoke event, May 23-26; breakfast specials for Father's Day weekend, June 13-15; the Independence Day celebration, July 4-6; and festivities over Labor Day weekend, August 29-

September 1.

Those who venture away from the campground, which lies 70 miles from the

southernmost point in the U.S., will find a wide range of cultural and historical activities nearby, including: Snorkeling and diving among the wrecks of pirate ships.

- Swimming with dolphins at the Dolphin Research Center.
- Theater of the Sea Marine Park, where visitors can work with marine mammals in the "Trainer for a Day" program.
- Key West, worth a day by itself so that one can visit Harry S. Truman's Little White House, the Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum, the Lighthouse and Military Museum and the Audubon House and Gardens.
- Indian Key, which once was a pirate haven because of its natural deep harbor.
- World Wide Sportsman, offering travel services, retail store information, Bass Pro shops and the Islamorada Fish Company.
- Florida Keys Wild Bird Center, where licensed individuals rehabilitate ill, injured and orphaned wild birds, preparing them for release to their natural habitat.
- The Great White Heron and National Key Deer refuges.
- Fort Jefferson, the largest masonry fortress in the Western Hemisphere.

More information is at the [Fiesta Key web site](#).

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