

ATLANTA HOMESTM LIFESTYLES

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YOUR
STYLE

GET
INSPIRED!
FRESH LOOKS
FOR FALL



PASSPORT
TRAVEL



ADVENTURE UNLOCKED

The United States' Southernmost point exudes an allure all its own.

WRITTEN BY *Claire Ruhlin*



BRIMMING WITH offbeat appeal, Key West is known as much for its quirky, welcoming community as it is for its tropical sun-bleached sands and translucent blue waters. Freshly renovated to boast contemporary amenities including a pool bar, cigar lounge and on-site food truck, The Gates Hotel, sited at the island's entry point, is an exciting option for visitors in search of fresh accommodations that don't sacrifice this casual mindset.

Key West spans a mere 4 square miles, so it's easy to transition from one sight to another, and the most convenient—and fun—way to explore is by bike. Pick up a blue Martone Cycling Company two-wheeler from The Gates and whizz from coast to cabana (cycling programs and sunset rides are also available). Smathers and Higgs beaches, both just down the road, offer public ocean access, while Fort Zachary Taylor, a state park and national historic landmark, provides more seclusion for a small fee, boasting picnic tables, swimming coves and walking paths. For a closer look at nature, stroll the 11-acre Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Garden across the street from the hotel.

Once you've had your fill of sand and sun, it's a quick jaunt to the shops, sights and restaurants in New Town as well as in historic Old Town, location of The Ernest Hemingway Home & Museum, where you'll find relics from the beloved author's illustrious career. For a history lesson on Prohibition—and the local libations—tour the Key West First Legal Rum Distillery (specialty cocktails made with its original white rum are also available at The Gates' poolside bar, Rum Row).

For a creative outlet, enjoy cooking lessons from a rotating lineup of the island's best chefs at local kitchenware purveyor Isle Cook and enjoy sunset and a show at the famed Mallory Square down the road. And don't forget to snap an obligatory photo next to the famous "Southernmost Point" buoy. There's also no shortage of after-dark activities; Duval Street, spanning more than a mile from shore to shore, houses countless shops, restaurants and bars (Green Parrot is a local favorite) that rarely see a slow night.

"Slow," however, might be just the word to describe life on Key West—which, as the locals will agree, seems to run on its own timetable. In fact, many residents are vacationers who decided to make their stay permanent—and it's not difficult to see why. gateshotelkeywest.com



Newly renovated with modern amenities such as a pool bar, cigar lounge (with locally crafted Rodriguez Cigar Factory cigars) and The Blind Pig food truck, The Gates Hotel blends laid-back style with modern-minimalist accommodations for an experience that's as casual as it is refined. *opposite* Key West's sunsets are celebrated nightly at Mallory Square. The island's architecture serves as tangible evidence of the area's rich history. Street stalls with brightly colored ornaments pepper the streets.



TO THE STREETS >>

Though it feels far-removed from the mainland, Key West embraces the burgeoning trend of mobile dining, most recently with the opening of The Blind Pig food truck. Operating from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. at The Gates Hotel, Blind Pig serves a selection of tacos, sandwiches and snacks. For a taste of traditional Cuban fare, sample the Cafe Con Leche (Cuban coffee with steamed milk, also available over ice) or a savory breakfast sandwich from counter-service eatery Cuban Coffee Queen, which has both a waterfront and downtown locations. gateshotelkeywest.com, cubancoffeequeen.com

