

# Insider's Guide to Tallahassee

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The Insider's Guide to the 100 Places, People, Events & Things that make Tallahassee Living Unique  
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1. MILKSHAKES AT 3 A.M. While it looks like a mid-century throwback, the award-winning Park Avenue Diner, located in the heart of FSU's campus, actually opened less than two years ago. The campus's only sit-down restaurant is open 24/7 and serves up an all-American menu, featuring Philly cheese steaks and chocolate milkshakes.

2. WILD ANIMALS' BEST FRIEND Clueless city dwellers who come across a motherless baby possum or a bird fallen out of the nest have been calling the warmhearted folks at the St. Francis Wildlife Foundation for help since 1977. The nonprofit local organization provides care and rehabilitation for nearly 4,000 sick, injured and orphaned wild animals each year. Look to their Web site, [stfranciswildlife.org](http://stfranciswildlife.org), for information on what to do if you come across an injured wild animal and the necessary steps to ensure its safety.

3. TAKE THE EARPLUGS Last year, Florida State University offered 507 concerts on campus, covering a broad range of styles — classical, multi-cultural, steel band, jazz, choral and more. But if you can only make one, make it The PRISM Concert. The annual band extravaganza, usually held the first weekend in December, packs a nonstop performance into 90 melodious minutes that will dazzle any crowd of music lovers. It has a sampling of everything, with performers and surprises sprinkled throughout Ruby Diamond Auditorium.

4. TOUR THE OLD CAPITOL The quintessential Tallahassee sight — seeing the Old Capitol juxtaposed in front on the towering new version as you drive up Apalachee Parkway — almost wasn't. Saved from the wrecking ball by a public outcry, the Old Capitol now is the Florida Center of Political History and Governance and is open to the public. Squeeze past the visiting schoolkids to see Florida memorabilia such as the Andrew Jackson portrait that hung behind the Senate president's desk from 1929 to the 1970s, and the brogans worn by "Walkin' and"; Lawton Chiles in his campaigns.

5. A CAPITOL USE OF BEER CANSEnvironmental sensitivity is in action at "Stormsong"; the 50-foot series of dolphins frolicking in a cascading fountain in front of the Capitol's Duval Street entrance. Cast from stainless steel and recycled aluminum, the sculpture was designed by Florida artist Hugh Nicholson. "Stormsong"; replaced the fountain area's "Five Flags"; display in 2000.

6. A (SAUSAGE) LINK TO THE PAST Bradley's Country Store, located off Old Centerville Road in the middle of nowhere, hearkens back to old-fashioned days. Run out to stock up on Bradley's signature country sausage any time, or join the crowd during special events. Bradley's Country Fun Day is held on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, and the 18th-century-style Tallahassee Colonial Faire is held in February.

7. FINDING THE PERFECT RECORD, FOR CHEAP If you love music, chances are you've been to Vinyl Fever, located at West Pensacola and White Drive. And if you haven't, stop what you're doing and go pick up that CD you've been wanting. The store is stocked with new and used music in all forms — mainstream to independent to experimental — and can be found on CD, cassette, even 20th century vinyl. And the prices can't be beat. Used CDs found in the "budget"; area are as cheap as 99 cents, hard-to-find imports and vintage records always are available, and the staff is extremely knowledgeable.

8. A ROOM WITH A VIEW It's said that on a clear day you can see the coast from the lofty vantage point at the top of the Capitol building, located 22 stories above Monroe Street. Even if clouds ruin the view, you'll still get an idea of how wooded Tallahassee is, and how hilly. You also can see such nearby landmarks as Tallahassee Memorial Hospital, the Leon County Courthouse, Leon High School (the oldest high school in town), and First Presbyterian Church (the oldest church building in town).

9. GOIN' WILD No, it ain't Disney World, but Valdosta's Wild Adventures is an easy hour-and-a-half drive away, with lots of amusements and much shorter lines. There are plenty of hair-raising roller coasters and thrill rides, live shows that are small enough to give you a close encounter with the park's signature animals (ever been licked by a giraffe?), about a hundred concerts a year, and special events. There's a pretty awesome zone just for children, and many a local mom has invested in the park's annual pass to keep the fun going all year long.

10. A CHEAP LIQUID THRILL No need to buy Evian when Tallahassee's water is just so darn good, practically right out the ground. When it's pumped out of the underground limestone aquifer, the water has been through nature's water filter — layers of sand and clay that are 200 feet thick. A little chlorine and fluoride are all that's added. In fact, about 30 minutes away is a plant bottling basically the same water. And it's bargain-priced: For the same dollar you'd spend for a bottle, you can buy 1,000 gallons of Tallahassee's finest H<sub>2</sub>O.

11. SEARCH THROUGH FLORIDA'S HISTORY

The Union Bank of Tallahassee is a historical gem. Originally located on Adams Street, it stands as the oldest surviving bank building in the entire state. Operations began in 1841 and it has housed a bakery, a church, a beauty parlor, a dance studio, a newspaper office and a feed store. Today, the Union Bank is home to an extension of Florida A&M University's Black Archives and has been relocated to Apalachee Parkway and Calhoun Street.

12. A TUBULAR EXPERIENCE There's no easy way to get there and no simple way to explain how to rent a float or manage the parking, so tag along with a more experienced friend and go tubing at Ichetucknee Springs State Park. Start with a plunge in the Blue Hole, which feeds the river, then take a float. The 73-degree, spring-fed river is a sublime counterpoint to summer's heat, but you have to get there early, before the park reaches its daily capacity. It's also open during the colder months, when a canoe trip on the crystalline waters can be a different, more solitary, experience.

13. WHERE THE POLITICAL ACTION IS Take the Capitol tour, but if you want to see how laws are really made, you need to toddle across Pensacola Street to Clyde's & Costello's. The dark décor hasn't changed much since it opened 27 years ago, but lawmakers and lobbyists still pack the bar cheek-to-jowl during the legislative session. Because only a minimal amount of food is served (although there is a maximal amount of rumor-mongering), all of that wheeling and dealing is being done in the proverbial smoke-filled room. In the off-session season, it's also a popular watering hole for the college crowd.

14. (REALLY) BIG FOOD There are lots of great pizzas to be eaten in town, but for a truly unique experience, you gotta try the New York-style, hand-tossed pies at Momo's. It was started here in 1999 and, with cheap prices, locations on Market and Tennessee streets and cute boho chick servers, its hole-in-the-wall atmosphere appeals to students and locals alike. They're not kidding when they say the slices are "as big as your head." You have to tilt the 30-inch, tabletop-sized Big Daddy XL pizza to carry it out the door.

15. CATCHING RAYS Near the center of campus lies the vast, freshly cut Landis Green, a favorite hangout for FSU students. Located between Strozier Library and Landis Hall, the green offers a picture-perfect vignette of college life during Tallahassee's warmer seasons. At any given moment, students can be found sprawled out, playing football, strumming on guitars, studying, sunbathing, eating, sleeping or simply people-watching in between classes.

16. LET US EAT CAKE You have not truly lived until you have eaten a slice of the yellow cake with buttercream frosting created by The Cake Shop. Owner Linda Richards (aka The Cake Lady) never advertises, it practically requires a GPS unit to find the business on John Knox Road, and cakes are made by reservation only. But it's worth the extra effort to get a sweet treat made from "formulas" created by Lorraine Crum, who started the business in her Sopchoppy kitchen 35 years ago.

17. HANKIE, NO PANKY One of Tallahassee's best dramas occurs every year and the price is free — the last day of session at the Capitol. The two-story "fishbowl" is packed with legislators, lobbyists, staffers and reporters, and the atmosphere is electric with the sound of hundreds of voices reverberating throughout the marble rotunda. The buzz begins in the evening, but it takes an intrepid spirit to last until the hanky drop signaling sine die — the end of the 60-day session — which often happens late in the evening.

18. A MIDTOWN HEIRLOOM Walk around Goodwood Museum and Gardens and you'll get a sense of Old Florida charm and splendor. Once the centerpiece of a 2,400-acre plantation, the main house has been restored. All furnishings are original to the house, and the plants and flowers outside also are "heirloom" — none are used that appeared after 1929. With majestic oaks, sprawling lawns and a breezy front porch, it remains a popular place for antique shows, lectures, demonstrations, holiday events and live music.

19. ST. MARKS WILDLIFE REFUGE BUTTERFLY MIGRATION Oooh. Ahhh. Pwetty! For "butterfiles," the annual monarch butterfly migration is a Tallahassee tradition. Likewise, the annual Monarch Butterfly Festival in October is a must-see experience, with programs, exhibits and tours that educate the curious about monarchs and other North Florida butterflies. The wildlife refuge consists of 68,000 acres and is spread across Taylor, Wakulla and Jefferson counties.

20. NATURAL BRIDGE REENACTMENT Hear the plunk of a banjo. Try some hardtack and taste the bitterness of black powder. Cover your ears when the cannon fires. This annual historical drama takes you back in time — to March 6, 1865, and the decisive battle that prevented Tallahassee's capture by the Yankees during the final days of the War Between the States. The battle is recreated every March on the actual battlefield near Woodville.

21. MARIANNA BAT CAVES Quick! To the bat cave! Well, kind of. Because populations of gray bats are declining, humans aren't allowed to visit them when they're resting. So tours in Florida Caverns State Park don't go into any caves used regularly by bats. Holy bummer, Batman! But you can see dazzling formations of limestone stalactites, stalagmites, soda straws, flowstones and draperies. And take a plunge in the Blue Hole or paddle the Chipola River while you're there.

22. **THE VERY ORIGINAL TALLAHASSEE** Ever wonder why the word "Apalachee" is so widely used in Tallahassee? It all began with the Apalachee Indians. Mission San Luis de Apalachee was the western capital of the Spanish mission system in Florida from 1656 to 1704, and boasted a population of more than 1,400 Apalachee Indians who lived nearby. In fact, today's Apalachee Parkway is named after the trade route linking the mission with St. Augustine. The mission itself has recreated dwellings, chapels and costumed interpreters.
23. **ROADSIDE GOOBER ENTREPRENEURS** Boiled peanut stands are as much a part of the landscape around Tallahassee as FSU bumper stickers and law offices. You can find the squishy, salty Southern delicacies on almost any back road or highway, and you can get 'em plain or sometimes Cajun-style. So keep an eye out for these roadside establishments the next time you're daytripping or doing the yard-sale thing.
24. **FOREVER THE JUNIOR MUSEUM** Because it was created 40 years ago to educate children, the Tallahassee Museum of History and Natural Science was originally known (and is stuck in the minds of old-timers) as the Junior Museum. Any twentysomething who grew up here probably attended a critter class and explored the nature trails, cultural history displays and visited the "guest animal." However, in our (hugely nonscientific and incomplete) survey, nobody has ever seen the black bear awake.
25. **FRENCH CUISINE 101** A generation of young Tallahasseeans have gotten their introduction to French food courtesy of Chez Pierre restaurant. Crepes Poulet and Salade Maison are a lunchtime classic, and it takes only one trip to learn one must always save room for dessert. Half the fun of a visit to "Chez P" is choosing something delectable from the pastry tray.
26. **RILEY HOUSE MUSEUM** In the early 1900s, John G. "Professor" Riley — the first principal of the first public high school for black students in Tallahassee — was one of several black middle-class homeowners in what would become downtown Tallahassee. Of these pioneering homes, only the Riley House has survived the wrecking ball and lives to tell the story of a historically significant part of Tallahassee's black history. Thanks to the efforts of volunteers and concerned citizens, the Riley House is a local historical jewel.
27. **GULF ESCAPE** When Tallahassee hits the beach, this 29-mile-long barrier island in Apalachicola Bay is the No. 1 choice. Less than two hours after pulling out of the driveway, you can be enjoying St. George Island's emerald green water, blue skies, white sandy beaches and offshore fishing. And it can be a sublime-to-ridiculous experience, with everything from multimillion-dollar mansions to the undeveloped beaches and dunes of St. George Island State Park — yours to enjoy for a \$5 (per car) admission.
28. **THE MAG LAB** Florida State University's National High Magnetic Field Laboratory is a great attraction for scientists eager to unlock the secrets of advanced materials and improved medical imaging. It's the world's premier center for high-field magnet research and development, located in Innovation Park near the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering. If you have a "duh, whaa" kind of feeling whenever you hear about it, the facility offers an annual open house in February, with activities, tours and displays to reveal the lab's scientific mysteries to all ages.
29. **FLEA MARKET TALLAHASSEE** Jewelry. Knives. Pets. Produce. T-shirts. Leather goods. Oh, and don't forget the funnel cake. On any given weekend, between 200 and 250 vendors will be offering their wares. You can find practically anything for cheap at this market, permanently located on Capital Circle Southwest between Woodville Highway and Crawfordville Road since 1984.
30. **LITTLE DINNERS, LOTS A EXPERIENCE** One of Tallahassee's best dining experiences is one most folks have never heard of. Each semester, senior hospitality students at Florida State University put on the Ashby Stiff Little Dinner Series, planning, cooking and serving five-course meals to those lucky enough to score a ticket to one of the six Tuesday-night dinners. Like football, a donation (to the school's scholarship fund) gives you a much better chance of getting one of the 70 coveted spots. But even with the donation, the sumptuous meals — usually themed by country and including wines, appetizers, multiple courses and desserts — are less than \$50 per person.
31. **NOT FOR SENIORS ONLY** The nationally accredited Tallahassee Senior Center (located in what old-timers refer to as "the old Armory building") is a whirlwind of activity on weekdays. It offers tons of free and reasonably priced classes (arts and crafts are big), recreational, social, intellectual and physical activities, health screenings, dances, travel groups and more. And you don't even have to be AARP-aged to avail yourself of Senior Center offerings — they're open to everyone over the age of 18.
32. **SWEET SONGSTRESS** If you've been to a fund-raising event in Tallahassee, you've probably met local jazz icon Pam Laws. Through her faith and love of the community, she supports various charities and teaches — all with the same passion she exudes on stage. No wonder her classes at Tallahassee Community College are in as high demand as her concert tickets.
33. **LOOK, UP IN THE SKY . . . .** It's tree branches! Perhaps the ultimate iconic Tallahassee image is a shady

canopy road. The paths of Centerville, Miccosukee, Meridian, Old Bainbridge, St. Augustine and other local roads follow trails created centuries ago by American Indians, which were later followed by Spanish explorers and American settlers. The historic routes are a picturesque look at Tallahassee's rich history and include Indian mounds, sites from the antebellum period and former hunting estates.

34. **OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS** &hellip; To Nicholson's Farmhouse restaurant we go! Located just outside Havana, it's a bit of a drive, but worth it for an exceptional dining experience. The historic family plantation built in 1828 combines Southern charm and food. After enjoying their aged steaks (including a heart-shaped version for sweethearts) and boiled peanuts, Nicholson invites you to take a hayride, browse the antique gift shop or simply enjoy the countryside from one of the porches, where there are plenty of rocking chairs to go around.

35. **TALLAHASSEE LITTLE THEATRE**Tallahassee Little Theatre was founded in 1949, and its first plays were rehearsed in an airport hangar and presented in a military movie hall at Dale Mabry Field. Today, TLT has a permanent home located in Midtown and offers a full season of shows ably presented by talented locals.

36. **SPRINGTIME TALLAHASSEE PARADE**A veritable cacophony of color, sound and pageantry, the Springtime parade is one of our hometown's flagship events, celebrating history, culture and springtime in the South. Launched in 1967 to forestall efforts to move the state capital downstate, the beads, the bands, the Southern belles, &ldquo;Andrew Jackson" &ndash; and Andrew Jackson protesters &ndash; all have become part of this annual Tallahassee tradition.

37. **CRABS AND MORE, UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL**When you visit Jack and Anne Rudloe's Gulf Specimen Marine Laboratory, just a short drive away in Panacea, don't expect to cuddle up with sleek and graceful dolphins. Instead, you get intimate with plankton, jellyfish, hermit crabs, seahorses and other prickly critters that call the northern regions of the Gulf of Mexico home. The lab features a total of 30,000 gallons of seawater, contained in aquariums and special interactive tanks that really put visitors in touch with nature. The lab's Gulf Specimen Aquarium is open seven days a week.

38. **CAMELIAS AND AZALEAS**A place of beauty all year round. That's how Alfred B. Maclay designed the landscape around his winter home in Tallahassee in 1923. Thirty years later, his gardens were given over to the state, and they became Alfred B. Maclay State Gardens. Unlike floral show gardens that are changed every year, Maclay designed his gardens to work with nature rather than manipulate it. The park has grown over the years to incorporate five miles of multipurpose trails looping around Lake Overstreet that are a favorite for walking, biking, jogging and horseback riding.

39. **JINGLE BELL, JINGLE BELL, JINGLE BELL RUN**We defy you not to smile at the sight &ndash; and especially the sound &ndash; of 2,000 people walking, running, rollerblading, dog walking and baby strolling around downtown Tallahassee during the 1.8-mile (3K) Jingle Bell Run. It's part of Winterfest, a night of fun festivities that includes lighting the trees, food, crafts and a holiday parade down Monroe Street.

40. **A LARGER-THAN-LIFE MOVIE EXPERIENCE**What's five stories tall, painted in silver and big enough to show a life-sized whale? It's the Challenger Learning Center's IMAX screen. IMAX movies are shot on special larger-than-life film that renders a visually stunning and clear image. A killer wrap-around digital sound system doesn't hurt, either. Whether you're plumbing the icy depths of the Titanic's resting place or bumping around tornadoes with storm chasers, IMAX immerses you in the scene.

41. **FORESTMeadOWS PARK AND ATHLETIC CENTER**What's cool about Forestmeadows Park is that the public can play country-club tennis without having to pay country-club prices. But this place is more than just tennis. &ldquo;I think there are so many things," said Mike Mulrennan, supervisor of the city-run facility on North Meridian Road. &ldquo;We've got tennis, but there's also biking and hiking trails, the swimming pool in the summer, and we have a new fitness center. It's a nice environment, and a good place to get away and unwind.&rdquo;

42. **CHRISTMAS COMES ALIVE**It happens on the second weekend in December at Killearn United Methodist Church during &ldquo;The Living Christmas Story.&rdquo; Each night for four nights, the community is invited to drive through (or, for less waiting, take the hayride) and see vignettes from the story of the birth of Jesus. On any given night, there are 250 costumed participants, 80 folks working behind the scenes, and live horses, sheep and donkeys as part of the show. It's free (they won't even take a donation), and organizers estimate that up to 10,000 people per year attend.

43. **LIGHTING THE NIGHT**It's the American Cancer Society's biggest fundraising event of the year, but the 18-hour Relay for Life, held each May, also is an occasion for remembrance and support. One of the most moving sights occurs after nightfall, when the quarter-mile track is completely encircled by luminary bags, each light dedicated to someone who has faced cancer or has died from the disease.

44. **CHRISTMAS AT LEMOYNE**Christmas provides a wonderful theme for artistic expression, and the LeMoyne Art

Foundation takes this time to deck its gallery halls in high style during its "Holiday Show." The show features themed Christmas trees and gift items; outside, the tranquil Helen Lind Sculpture Garden is ablaze with seasonal lights. The show is the art foundation's biggest exhibit and fund-raising event of the year and runs from right after Thanksgiving up to New Year's.

45. GOVERNOR'S MANSION The Florida Governor's Mansion is the only one in the United States with a swing on the front porch and a manatee (sculpture) in the backyard. The mansion was built in 1957 and today is home to first cat Cee Cee and first dog Marvin, but they allow Gov. and Mrs. Bush to live there too. Terrorism fears have limited access to The People's House, but public tours are available during the holiday season and by appointment. Be sure to check out the silver punch bowl in the dining room when you're there. It's decorated with Florida flora, fauna and historical references.

46. INTERSTATE ROAD TRIPPIN' Head 10 miles north of town and you're in another state. Heck, it takes folks in Miami seven hours of driving to make the same claim. Fill up with some (comparatively) cheap Georgia gas and laugh all the way home, 'cause in Florida, you don't have to pay income tax and the Lotto jackpot always is bigger here.

47. STRIKE, STRIKE AND STRIKE UP THE BANDS If you like marching bands, then catch the strut on the streets during Florida A&M University's Homecoming Parade. Always held on the Saturday morning of FAMU's homecoming football game, you'll want to set up a chair (it's a long one) and watch the Marching 100 and upwards of 20 high school bands from around the region as they parade past.

48. THE NAME SAYS SEVEN DAYS, BUT WHO'S COUNTING? The arts festival known as Seven Days of Opening Nights started out popular eight years ago and has, in the ensuing years, evolved into a community institution and mini-social season each February, with many events selling out quickly. Dance, music, theater, fine art: This year the event ranges over 12 days, with something for just about everybody's taste and pocketbook.

49. NO, THEY'RE NOT MARRIED They just sound like it. Now into their second generation of moms driving the young 'uns to school, John (Dawson) and Tammy (Osborn), were first paired up for the morning show at a Bainbridge, Ga., mega-radio station in 1989. After a five-year break, the duo hooked up again six years ago on STAR98 (WBZE-FM) and have been chatting away during drive time ever since about the news of the day, movies, car wrecks, critters, boats and weight-loss products.

50. REMEMBERING VIETNAM Florida's Vietnam Memorial is located right across from the Old Capitol and was dedicated in 1985. Two granite towers suspend a 40-foot American flag in tribute to those who died in the war, whose names are inscribed on the towers. It's said that during construction of the towers, veterans placed personal items inside them.

51. PUPS 'N' POKER Jefferson County Kennel Club is the place to go to place a bet on fast, skinny dogs. "Jaycee Kaycee" is one of the longest-running greyhound tracks in Florida and attracts gamblers from all over North Florida and South Georgia. Aside from racing, the club offers poker — and you can get a bite to eat at the famous Turf Club.

52. ST. MARKS TRAIL Back in the old days, when cotton was still king, the Tallahassee-St. Marks Railroad shuttled tons of goods and timber from the plantations to the docks. The 20-mile-long railroad operated for nearly 147 years. Twenty years ago, the state bought part of it and repurposed it into a new recreational venue: the Tallahassee-St. Marks Historic Railroad Trail. Now the rail bed is home to hikers, joggers and bicyclists who want to make their leisurely way to the coast.

53. TALLAHASSEE'S YOUNG VOICES In the 10 years since its founding as a group to help boys with limited social and economic opportunities, The Boys' Choir of Tallahassee has performed throughout the nation and the world. Along the way the choir has achieved glowing recognition — from such august personages as Gov. Jeb Bush and Oprah Winfrey — as well as numerous awards. No audition is needed to join the choral group, but its 125 members are required to maintain academic achievement with an eye toward college.

54. RED HILLS HORSE TRIALS Saddle up! This prestigious cross-country steeplechase event is held in March and features a challenging obstacle course, dressage, educational exhibits and demonstrations, shopping and good eats. Funds raised during the event benefit nonprofit organizations that promote education and environmental awareness. The event gets its name from the fertile Red Hills area, which extends from Thomasville, Ga., down to Tallahassee.

55. JEFFERSON COUNTY WATERMELON FESTIVAL How far can you spit a watermelon seed? Find out at this festival in Monticello, which celebrates Jefferson County's agricultural heritage once a year during the peak growing season in June. Enjoy a rodeo, barbecue, foot race, marching bands and — oh yeah — watermelon!

56. CELEBRATE AMERICA The daylong Fourth of July extravaganza at Tom Brown Park, capped off by a country music

concert and superb fireworks show, is something you'll want to experience at least once. Some people swear that once is enough — it's always hotter'n blue blazes, it usually rains, and it takes a while to get out once the light show is over. But it's a grand event, and eventually the buses will get you back to the park-and-ride lot. It's up to you to get to work on time the next day.

57. "FALL"ING IN LOVE While springtime gets the big festival and the showy blooms, many a Tallahasseean has fallen in love with the area during the fall months. You're never quite sure when it's going to happen, but sometime in October or November — just when you think you can't stand another 90-plus-degree day and maybe there is something to that global warming talk — the temperature, humidity and the leaves drop. There's a refreshing breeze, the sun is shining, and a brisk walk sounds like the best idea you've ever had.

58. LEVIATHAN DEALS At the Junior League of Tallahassee's annual "Whale of a Sale" event. There's a deal for you, whatever your shopping style. Pay an entry fee and a 50-percent markup and you can have your pick of the merchandise on Friday night. There'll still be plenty left for Saturday's all-day sale. Or wait until the last minutes for the best bargains — a whirlwind dash to fill paper sacks with whatever's left for a buck a bag.

#### 59. HONORING THE AC GUY

Every year on Bastille Day (July 14), the owners and patrons of Waterworks put on a little play to celebrate the accomplishments of famous Apalachicola John Gorrie, recognized as an early pioneer in the creation of refrigeration, ice-making and air conditioning — you know, the only things that make it worth living here in the summertime. Gorrie wasn't French, he was Scots-Irish. But in 1860, a U.S. patent for a refrigeration system was granted to a Frenchman, Ferdinand P.E. Carre.

#### 60. TALLAHASSEE TIME

There's a little wrinkle in the space-time continuum here. Or maybe it's a dog year thing. You'll think, "Oh, that event started three or four years ago," only to learn later that it's been going on for 15 years. And even if you've lived here the better part of two decades, you're not really "from" here unless your granddaddy went to Leon High.

#### 61. ONE DEGREE OF SEPARATION

Never, ever talk behind someone's back in this town because, sure as shootin', the person you're gossiping to is that person's cousin, co-worker, church friend, ex-spouse, classmate, or is otherwise known to or related to them. It's a fact of Tallahassee life — while we may not know Kevin Bacon, everybody knows somebody who knows everybody else.

62. SOMETHING TO PROTEST ABOUT  
As the seat of state politics and home to two major universities and a community college, Tallahassee is a lightning rod for protesters, from the turbulent anti-war '60s to the recent battle over Terri Schiavo's right to live or die. If someone's got an ax to grind or an ox to be gored, chances are we'll see a few local landmarks on the state news that night.

63. DOWNTOWN? GETDOWN!  
A popular "new tradition," Hancock Bank Downtown GetDowns are the place to be on fall Friday nights. (There are six, usually scheduled before home football games, with an extra thrown in during Springtime Tallahassee.) The family-friendly block parties have grown over the years, attracting upwards of 4,000 people with themes such as the Ultimate Pep Rally and Beach Bash to share good times, live entertainment, scrumptious food and kids' activities. The fun community event helps to raise funds for the United Way of the Big Bend.

64. ANTIQUING TOWNS  
Tallahassee has its share of antique stores, but look around and you'll find great places to find bargains in places such as Havana, Thomasville, Ga., Marianna, Monticello — even down in Crawfordville. Don't be afraid to haggle. Some shop owners sell stuff for clients who may accept a slightly lower price. Just be sure to bring cash and checks in case somebody doesn't accept plastic.

65. THE BEST DARN PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT. PERIOD.  
It's a big deal indeed: Our own Tallahassee Parks & Recreation Department recently was cited as "Best in America," receiving the National Gold Medal Award (the highest honor possible for a municipal or state park and recreation department). "It's the Academy Award of our field," said TPRD director Randy Trousdell. What makes us so great? Besides the popular athletic leagues (softball, baseball, football, basketball, volleyball, soccer, track and field, gymnastics, aquatics and more), TPRD is responsible for the beauty and functionality of the city's parks and recreation facilities — quite a Herculean task.

66. FOOD, RIDES AND LOTS OF FUN  
We all find our own fun at the North Florida Fair. For the young at heart (and stomach), the rides are the bomb. (If the Tilt-a-Whirl makes you queasy, forget about riding the Wild Claw.) Others can't get enough sticky candy apples, fluffy cotton candy and chewy funnel cakes. (Fried Twinkie, anyone?) Or maybe the music shows, agricultural exhibits and

games of chance are more your speed. What's not to love? 67. FIRST FRIDAYS AT RAILROAD SQUARE

The first Friday of every month, the art park's various galleries open to the public from 6 to 9 p.m. There's live music, wine, cheese and dance. "First Fridays are so exciting," said E'Layne Koenigsberg, who runs the art park off Industrial Drive. "We are a happening, fun spot. We are Tallahassee's art district." 68. TALLAHASSEE NURSERIES

Founded in 1938, this local institution at first sold fresh produce, later adding azaleas and camellias. During the first years of operation, plants sold by the nursery were actually grown in the ground and then dug up at the time of sale. Container gardening revolutionized the nursery industry in the 1950s, and Tallahassee Nurseries has never looked back. Pulling a red shopping wagon along the pebble and brick walkways is a favorite weekend pastime for locals. 69. TALLAHASSEE DOG PARK

Tucked away in a corner of Tom Brown Park, "dog's little acre" is a fun playground for carefree pooches who like to run off-leash. As on any playground, you'll see the usual cast of characters: the bully, the flirt, the wallflower, the jock, the spaz — just the canine versions. But if your pup is more Cutie than Cujo, don't worry — there's a separate area for large dogs and small dogs. 70. THE SET

Almost literally in the center of Florida A&M University, The Set serves as the heart of the campus. Famuans know you'll always find a friend or perhaps a faculty or staff member to talk to on the grassy patch near Lee Hall. It's also a popular spot for shows and other special events. Now closed to traffic, cars used to be able to drive through The Set — albeit verrrry slowly, giving drivers enough time for conversation or a quick kiss as they passed through. 71. WHALE WATCHING ON CENTERVILLE ROAD

Bill Brinson's whale-and-water sculptures have been turning heads and stopping motorists along Centerville Road since the summer of 2001. Brinson and some friends completed the first steel-and-plaster whale sculpture on Sept. 10 of that year, and later named it "Glory" as a memorial to those who lost their lives during the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Brinson's sculpture garden attracts hundreds of visitors every year, and he hosts a Sept. 11 memorial annually. 72. THE BABY SHOOTER

Dina Ivory has been photographing babies and children here for 22 years, and many a Tallahassee home is adorned with her signature shot — a smiling, naked 6-month-old baby in a bowl. There's often a traffic jam around Ivory's Mahan Drive studio when she has her six-times-a-year photo specials. During those events, she'll shoot upwards of 300 children in a single day. Now she's taking senior-class portraits of those who were babies-in-a-bowl not so long ago. 73. PUPS & PUMPKINS

If you get a knock at your door in late October and the little costumed imp says "Ruff or ruff!," you know it's time for Dog-O-Ween. Head to Tom Brown Park each year to see the best-dressed dogs hit the catwalk for this Leon County Humane Society benefit. Other activities for the pups include massages, ice-cream sundaes, the Ask-a-Trainer booth and more. Don't have a dog of your own? You'll be charmed by the pets available for adoption. 74. SUNDAY-MORNING PEOPLE WATCHING

Park yourself in the window seat of a favorite eatery — Bruegger's Bagels is one of our favorites. If you sit there long enough, all of Tallahassee will pass you by (or stop in for a nosh and a coffee). Dog walkers, cyclists, churchgoers, church skippers, cops, ambulance drivers, news anchors . . . you name it, you'll see it! 75. SUNLAND HOSPITAL

Some say it's haunted . . . Take one look at this bleak fortress in ruins, and you might agree. Sunland Hospital opened on Phillips Road in 1952 as the W.T. Edwards Tuberculosis Hospital. In 1968, it was renamed and converted into one of six Sunland Hospitals for physically and mentally handicapped children. In 1983, it was closed and its patients dispersed to smaller group homes. The legends are rampant, mostly concerning abuse or neglect of the young patients. Now crawling with vines and marred by graffiti, the abandoned hospital is in decay. Ghost hunters defy the "No Trespassing" signs at their own peril, but the scariest thing about Sunland may be its toxic levels of asbestos. 76. HENRY THE POLE-VAULTING FISH

A rare treat in recent days, during a ride on the glass bottom boat your guide will point out Henry as he swims sideways over a horizontal pole at the bottom of Wakulla Springs. That is, if the water is clear enough to see anything. Park Ranger Patty Gies says it's hard to predict when that is; your best chance is in the spring and fall, when the weather is dry. "When it's clear, we can see down 125 feet," she said. But if it rains — which it has done a lot in recent years — tannins turn the water into a "tea" that makes it hard to see. 77. WALTZING ON YOUR BIRTHDAY

Tallahassee has something really special for birthday boys and girls — the infamous "Tennessee Waltz" down the strip of watering holes lining West Tennessee Street. Wait until midnight strikes and show your ID to the doorman at each bar. You'll receive a small card that will, in turn, allow you one free drink. Sounds like

no big deal, but the strip has as many bars as you have fingers. The possibility of 10 free birthday drinks equals one fun birthday night. And a cab ride home.78. **FUN AT THE FUN STATION**

It's an arcade on steroids. Video games of the past, present and future are here, along with more physical pursuits such as go-karts, miniature golf, Jungle Quest laser tag, bumper boats and batting cages. Thursdays are cheap family fun, with a large pizza, four golf games, four laser-tag or go-kart games and a pitcher of soda for less than 25 bucks. And yes, they have Ms. Pac-Man.79. **EXPLORING A SINKHOLE**

For more "outdoorsy" folks, sinkholes are a fun way to spend a warm, sunny afternoon. At Leon Sinks, visitors find a truly natural experience walking the three-mile trail. The Leon Sink Geological Area is home to an array of trees, plants, flowers and animals. If it's too hot to walk, you can head over to the Cherokee Sink and state recreation area and plunge right into the water for free. It's 70 feet deep, 1,000 feet wide and surrounded by lush plants and rocks, great for sitting down and relaxing.80. **FOUND FOLK ART**

Told by God that "the door is the way," Mary Proctor one day started to paint on an old door lying in her yard. Creating three-dimensional works from found objects (buttons, mirrors, jewelry and more) and finding inspiration in memories of her childhood, her grandmother and in scripture, she realized her visions and taught herself to be an artist. Now featured in museums and galleries across the country, she owns and operates the American Folk Art Museum on Woodville Highway.81. **GRACIOUS PEBBLE HILL**

See how the Deep South royalty lived at this sprawling plantation, just a few miles north of the state line. It once was the winter home of the wealthy Hanna family, but few snowbirds live this well. The elegant house and lush grounds are open for tours, but the estate truly shines on special occasions such as the Fall Sampler (October) and Candlelight Christmas (December). Don't miss the collection of original Audubon paintings.82. **BREATHE IN SOME FRESH AIR**

Yes, that's right — Tallahassee now is home to an oxygen bar. The Breathing Room, located on Gaines Street, serves up big ol' helpings of air — fruity air, scented air, flavored air — but best of all, it's 100 percent fresh and clean.83. **A DAY AT THE RESERVATION**

The FSU Reservation is the perfect place to enjoy a warm, sunny day. Set across 73 acres on Lake Bradford, the "Rez" is full of outdoor activities, from rope courses to rock climbing, canoeing and sailboating. The Rez Fest, Reservation Run and March's Key West Sunset, featuring a live concert and free food, are just a few of the events that take place every year. Admission always is free for FSU students and is only \$2 for adults. Canoe and kayak rentals are inexpensive; the water-weary can lounge by the waterfront, play a game of volleyball or picnic with friends.84. **FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES**

The Tallahassee Mall built a huge new wing that for years offered a long, lonely walk to Parisian. Then came the AMC 20 movie megaplex. Now, on Friday nights the hallway is packed and abuzz with teens flirting, styling, chatting, texting, cell phoning, eating and, oh yeah, catching the latest releases on the big screen.85. **MICKEE FAUST**

Every family has one . . . that crude, rude, uncouth relative who screams for attention while the rest of the family plots to chain him to a cement block in the basement. Mickee Faust — ostensibly the "illegitimate sewer-rat brother" of Orlando's Theme Park Mouse King — is all that and more. Probably the only sewer rat with his own theater troupe, Mickee (aka performance artist Terry Galloway) and his minions stage several shows throughout the year. Earthy, lewd, shocking and funny as heck.86. **SEMINOLE SATURDAYS**

Since football coach Bobby Bowden arrived 30 years ago, autumn Saturdays on Florida State's campus have given rise to many traditions. One of the most electrifying rituals occurs after the fried chicken, boiled peanuts and cold beverages and before the team takes the field. As the Doak Campbell Stadium stands rumble with pre-game excitement, Chief Osceola rides out on an Appaloosa horse named Renegade and plants his flaming feathered spear at midfield. The 82,000+ fans roar in approval and their beloved Seminoles charge out onto the field.87. **THE SATURDAY-MORNING SHUFFLE**

There are certain people — let's call them baby boomers — who, at this slower-paced time in their lives, like to devote Saturday mornings to their care and feeding — mostly feeding. The addition of The Fresh Market in the Village Square Shopping center added a whole new level to local shopping-as-entertainment, but this crowd also can be found on their quest for the perfect tomato at the Downtown Market or the farmer's market in Market Square.88. **MUSEUM OF FLORIDA HISTORY**

There's much to do and see in the Museum of Florida History. See the vintage autos! See an original glass-bottom boat! See a mastodon skeleton (but don't even think about running over the giant armadillo)! Permanent exhibits feature Florida's involvement in World War II. There's also stuff about the citrus industry, steamboat travel and the biggest "arrowhead" ever found.89. **THE ORIGINAL TALLAHASSEEANS**

Located in the city's northeast off U.S. Highway 27, Lake Jackson Mounds Archaeological State Park is an

important piece of Florida history. While it's a serene natural spot today, between 500 and 800 years ago the area was a political and religious center for native peoples. The site features six temple mounds and possibly one burial mound; the largest mound is 36 feet tall. Many pre-Columbian artifacts have been found there, such as copper breastplates, anklets, cloaks and necklaces. The entrance fee is \$2 a carload.<sup>90</sup> **A LAP AROUND LAKE ELLA**

It's a glorified water retention pond, but there's no denying the attraction of this little Midtown body of water surrounded (all the way around now!) by a walking path. Within the course of the year it attracts dog walkers, runners, baby strollers, farmer's markets, holiday festivities, candlelight vigils, ducks & lots of ducks & the people who can't resist feeding them. Old-timers can recall when the city's annual July 4 fireworks display was held there & when people actually water-skied on the lake.<sup>91</sup> **RALLY IN TALLY**

Vroom! Take a bunch of vintage wheels, a drive-in diner and folks who love to strut their stuff, and you have rally clubs like the Capitol City Cruizers and Tallahassee StreetRodders. The clubs always welcome folks who want to see and talk about cool classic cars. The Cruizers hold drive-ins the first Saturday of the month at Popeyes on Thomasville Road near Interstate 10, and the StreetRodders hold their once-a-month drive-in at the Whataburger on Thomasville Road.<sup>92</sup> **BEHIND THE CURTAIN**

The Silver Slipper restaurant could be called Florida's second Capitol. For 50 years it's been closely tied to Florida politics and has been a favorite getaway for governors, legislators, lobbyists and other bigwigs. Appropriately enough, former Gov. Bob Graham worked as a waiter at the Slipper during one of his famous "work days." Its unique curtained alcoves provide privacy for political doings & or a romantic rendezvous.<sup>93</sup> **EDUCATION, NATURALLY**

With a sweeping view of Lake Iamonia and thousands of acres of lush timberland, Tall Timbers is one of the best-kept secrets in the Tallahassee area. Once part of the antebellum Woodlawn Plantation, Tall Timbers today is an ecological and forestry research center known for its quail population. Seminars and workshops are held here, as well as an annual open house and tours of the historic Beadel House, built in 1895.<sup>94</sup> **WATCH AN FSU STUDENT WALK A TIGHTROPE**

Originally created in 1947 as a way for male and female students to interact when Florida State University went co-ed, the Flying High Circus is one of only two collegiate circuses in the country, and also one of the most prestigious and entertaining groups on campus. And these acrobatic, trapeze-swinging jugglers make sure to pull out all the stops for their audience, as several acts often take place at the same time within its three rings. Performances are held during the first two weekends in April.<sup>95</sup> **THIRTY YEARS OF HEALTHY LIVING**

It's still a locally owned cooperative, but New Leaf Market has come a long way from the self-serve bulk bins when it began in 1974. Located on Apalachee Parkway, it's now a full-service grocery featuring health-food offerings. The bulk bins are still there, along with natural and organic fruits and vegetables, groceries, supplements, cheeses and (gasp!) even meat. Recent additions include a deli that serves up three meals a day, an organic coffee bar and free-trade general merchandise.<sup>96</sup> **GO AHEAD: FEED THE ANIMALS.**

From February through May (and June if it's a good season), Dick Howser Stadium is home to the Animals. This wildly passionate collection of Florida State baseball fans hurls its cheers, jeers and original song lyrics from historic Section B on the first-base side of the stadium. Having been featured by ESPN and Sports Illustrated, the Animals (actually students, alumni and other die-hard FSU baseball fans) are widely recognized as the best college baseball cheering section in the country.<sup>97</sup> **HONK IF YOU LOVE GEESE**

Late for work? Ready to spill your hot coffee all over yourself because they guy in front of you stops short to avoid running over some Canada geese? It never fails. These annual visitors love our ponds and parks, and Tallahasseeans love to lock up their brakes when the big birds cross the road.<sup>98</sup> **GET THE BLUES**

Tucked away in the woods and deep down winding roads is something rare in Tallahassee & blues music. The Bradfordville Blues Club has been a part of this town for many years and has hosted some renowned blues musicians, such as Jimmie Rogers, Bobby Rush and Big Daddy Kinsey. The walls are decorated with more than 50 original photos, autographed by the kings and queens of blues music, and the atmosphere is truly romantic. Tall, mossy oak trees, a blazing bonfire and the sweet sound of blues surround the intimate juke joint.<sup>99</sup> **IT'S AN ART MUSEUM! IT'S A SCIENCE MUSEUM!**

It's an art museum and a science museum, and it's official name is the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science. But to many Tallahasseeans, the modern structure on Kleman Plaza is known simply as "The Brogan." It's the place where kids go to unlock the mysteries of the universe, and if adults aren't careful they may learn something, too.<sup>100</sup> **THATSA LOTTA CHICKEN AND RICE**

Chicken pilau (pronounce it "per-low") is a staple at Southern weddings, funerals and meetings. But nobody does it bigger than the Coon Bottom Pilau, held off Highway 257 in the northern Leon County community of Concord to benefit the Concord Cemetery. The 49th annual event (always on the second Thursday of November)

attracted about 4,000 people who lined up to eat the chicken and rice dinner, cooked by volunteers over an open fire in cast-iron wash pots.