

Tourist tips:

Welcome to our beautiful island! We hope you have a wonderful, memorable stay here and to help make your visit amazing, here are a few tips for you:

- Be diligent about the use of sunscreen and reapply often. The sun is fantastic here but can be very intense and we don't want anyone to miss a single vacation day because of a sunburn!
- Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate! The combination of fabulous sun, ocean breezes and beach activity can dehydrate you very quickly. Bring plenty of water and please consider using refillable water bottles. **Less plastic is fantastic!**
- We are incredibly lucky to have so many turtles nest on our beautiful beaches! Each year hundreds of turtles arrive to lay their eggs. We know digging holes in the sand is a lot of fun but please remember to fill the holes in before you leave the beach for the day. Our turtles' lives depend on it. Sadly, hatchlings often fall into the holes left behind and are unable to climb out.
- Beach chairs, check; umbrella or tent, check; cooler, check; games, towels, toys, check. A lot of stuff to carry to the beach, right? We get it, but please note that we have a city ordinance against leaving anything on the beach overnight, INCLUDING YOUR TRASH. Female turtles can become entrapped in items left on the beach or may even choose not to dig a nest because of obstacles. WE REALLY DO LOVE OUR TURTLES!
- Speaking of our fantastic wildlife, we are also blessed with many kinds of shorebirds. While it does seem like fun to throw food and watch the gulls go into a "feeding frenzy", it is never a good idea. Not only is this bad for the gulls due to lack of nutrition for them, it also causes them to become dependent on humans for food. They become more aggressive and have been known to grab food out of someone's hand or even their mouth! Once the gulls and crows start growing in numbers in order to get a free meal, they start to invade the nests of our other, more delicate bird species and will become more prone to disease because of the increase in their population. Chasing the birds seems like fun too, but if they start to feel harassed or threatened, they won't lay eggs here anymore. The shorebirds are such a beautiful addition to our beaches, let's appreciate them from a distance. They are a joy to watch!
- We love dogs and know that you do too. They become part of our families and we want to include them in everything we do, right? We get it. Unfortunately, because our island is a designated turtle nesting and shorebird sanctuary, we do not allow dogs on the beaches here on Anna Maria Island. The only exception is for licensed, service dogs, not emotional support animals. Want to take your pup to play on the beach and in the water? You can go to any of the spots along the Manatee Avenue causeway so they can have fun in the sun too!

We are happy you are here and hope these tips help you to have a fantastic time on beautiful Anna Maria Island. Together we can keep this a true paradise!