

EVERGLADES



The Everglades cover the entire southern part of Florida, and Everglades National Park is the largest subtropical wilderness in the United States. It was created to protect these fragile ecosystems that have long been threatened by human activity. Declared a **Biosphere Reserve** in 1976 and classified as a *Wetland of International Importance* in 1987, the park has also been a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** since 1979. You will have a good chance of viewing some of the area's iconic wildlife, including alligators, crocodiles and even Florida panthers, as well as many species of birds, fish and amphibians. You will also enjoy exploring the park's mysterious swamps. Keep your camera at the ready!

WHAT TO DO

EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK ★★★

AIRBOAT

ALLIGATOR SAFARI ★★

The Everglades are associated with crocodiles and alligators, swamps and boat exploration. A thrilling **airboat** ride is a must! Learn all about this unique and impressive environment while you take in the sights. Several companies offer this type of tour, including **Sawgrass Recreation Park**, which also has reptile and endangered wildlife displays. Reservations required.
1006, NORTH US 27, WESTON
1-888-424-7262
WWW.EVERGLADESTOURS.COM

SOUTHERN SECTION ★★★

The park's **main entrance** is in **Homestead**, south of Miami, on Route 9336. Start with a visit to the **Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center** to watch an educational film on the Everglades. Six kilometres beyond the visitor center is the **Royal Palm visitor center** ★★ an interactive exhibit that presents the different ecosystems found in the park. Two walking trails begin nearby: **Anhinga Trail** ★★ and **Gumbo-Limbo Trail** ★. About 20 km south of the main entrance there is another short trail leading to **Pa-hay-okee Overlook** ★★.

This observation tower offers a magnificent **panoramic view** of the Everglades. A little further on, **West Lake Trail** ★ boardwalk trail wanders along the edge of West Lake through a **mangrove** forest, a fantastic tangle of raised roots and branches typical of the region. In the extreme south of the park, about 65 km from your starting point, you will reach the village of **Flamingo** on Florida Bay, home of the **Flamingo Visitor Center**.

EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK ★★★

Season: Open year-round, 24 hours a day.

Visitor centers:

- The **Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center** is at the park's main entrance, to the east. 40001 SR 9336, Homestead / 305-242-7700).
- The **Flamingo Visitor Center** is in the south of the park. (1 Flamingo Lodge Hwy, Homestead / 239-695-2945).
- **Shark Valley Visitor Center**, in the north (36000 SW 8th Street, Miami / 305-221-8776).
- The **Gulf Coast Visitor Center**, in the northwest, (815 Oyster Bar Lane, Everglades City / 239-695-3311).

Entry fee: \$30/vehicle including occupants. Valid 7 days. Purchase the America the Beautiful Pass for \$80 if you plan to visit more than 2-3 parks.

Shuttle service inside the park: No

www.nps.gov/ever



AIRBOAT ALLIGATOR SAFARI

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PA-HAY-OKEE OVERLOOK

© Wiki Commons, Marc Ruyckaert

AUTHENTIK TIP

Heat and humidity means mosquitoes. More than 60 species of mosquitoes are found in the Everglades! To reduce the number of bites, wear long, light-colored clothing and avoid wearing perfume. For better protection, apply mosquito repellent before going to the park!

THE AMERICAN ALLIGATOR

Very present in all parts of the park, this large reptile can be up to 5 metres long. The alligator is no longer an endangered species. Every spring, the female builds a nest in which she lays up to 80 eggs. Being a cold-blooded animal, the temperature at which the eggs develop determines the sex of the hatchling. Eggs that incubate at temperatures over 31.7 °C hatch as males, while those that incubate at temperatures under 30.5 °C hatch as females. The alligator is extremely agile in the water, but it can also reach a speed of up to 24 km/h on land! In addition, its jaws can exert a pressure of 536 kg/cm². Be sure to keep your distance!

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THE AMERICAN ALLIGATOR

THE AMERICAN CROCODILE

The American crocodile has a pointed snout and lower incisors that are visible when the mouth is closed. It can be distinguished from its cousin the alligator by virtue of its greyish-green colour. The crocodile is also more aggressive and will not hesitate to defend itself if it feels threatened. Unfortunately, the American crocodile is an endangered species, with only a few hundred specimens alive today. They live only in the southern Everglades and in Crocodile Lake wildlife refuge in north Key Largo. While alligators are typically found in freshwater habitats, the crocodile prefers salt water.

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THE AMERICAN CROCODILE



AMERICAN ALLIGATOR WITH BABIES

NORTHERN SECTION ★★

Tamiami Trail (US 41) is a small road between **Miami** and **Naples** that offers many attractions. It crosses Florida from east to west, passing through **Big Cypress National Preserve** ★ and following the northern edge of Everglades National Park.

SHARK VALLEY ★★★

Shark Valley ★★ is part of the national park (admission is included with the entry fee) but is on US 41, to the north. Pay a visit to the **Shark Valley Visitor Center** and then set out along **Shark Valley Loop Road** ★★, a 22-km paved trail where you will discover a **wide diversity of animals and plants**. You can **walk**, rent a **bicycle** or take a **tram tour**.

MICCOSUKEE INDIAN VILLAGE ★

Miccosukee Indians have been living in the northern Everglades since the mid-19th century. The tribe currently has about 500 members. The village recreates a **traditional camp** with palm frond shelters and embroidery and patchwork workshops. There is a **small museum** on the site and **shows in the alligator pit**, where alligator wrestlers demonstrate centuries-old techniques for catching the formidable reptiles. You can also take a Miccosukee-run **airboat tour**. Glide through the magnificent “River of Grass” and get a glimpse into the area’s rich history and culture as expert guides show you a side of the beautiful Everglades you can’t see anywhere else.

MILES MARKER 36, US 41

305-552-8365

WWW.MICCOSUKEE.COM/VILLAGE

LOOP ROAD ★

County Road 94, better known as Loop Road, is an interesting 90-minute detour off the US 41. There are many bridges along the way where you can stop and look for wildlife. And keep an eye out for alligators: they’re everywhere!

EVERGLADES CITY ★

The **Gulf Coast Visitor Center** is

in the village of **Everglades City** and marks the western entrance to the park. **The western part of the park is accessible only by boat**. The **Wilderness Waterway**, a 165-km canoe trail, connects Everglades City to Flamingo in the south of the park. You can also explore the **Ten Thousand Islands**, a chain of coastal islands, home to manatees and dolphins. **Canoes**

and kayaks can be rented at the visitor centre. There are several options for **nature cruises** ★★ in the area, including **Everglades City Airboat Tours**. Last chance to take an unforgettable nature tour of the beautiful Everglades. Reservations required (907, DuPont Street, Everglades City / 239-695-2400 / evergladescity-airboatstours.com).



SHARK VALLEY

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BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE

© Creative Commons, Nigiarob

© Creative Commons, National Park Service Homestead



SUNSET ON NINE MILE POND, EVERGLADES

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SEAKAYAKING IN THE MANGROVES

WHERE TO EAT

There are few restaurants in the area. The easiest and most enjoyable way to make the most of your park visit is to bring picnics and snacks that you can eat whenever you want, in the heart of nature.

EVERGLADES GATOR GRILL (\$\$)

If you'd like to try alligator meat, this small local snack bar style restaurant is the place to be. You'll find that it tastes a lot like chicken. If you're not

tempted by alligator, there are also other choices on the menu. You can take your meal to go, eat it at the counter or eat it outside on the patio.

36650, 192ND AVENUE SW, HOMESTEAD
786-243-0620
EVERGLADESGATORGRILL.BUSINESS.SITE

MICCOSUKEE RESTAURANT (\$\$)

Miccosukee is located at the Shark Valley entrance and specializes in Native American

food. It's not fine dining, but if you are looking for a place to have lunch in the area, this is a good option. They offer Miccosukee fry bread, pumpkin bread, Everglades frog legs, catfish, as well as standard American cuisine.

MILES MARKER 36, US 41, MIAMI
305-894-2374

CAMELLIA STREET GRILL (\$-\$-\$)

This charming and popular restaurant is often

recommended by the locals. It enjoys a convenient location in Everglades City, close to the tourist attractions. The food is fresh and delicious and the service is excellent. The gator tacos are a must-try!

202, CAMELLIA STREET E,
EVERGLADES CITY
239-695-2003
WWW.CAMELLIASTREETGRILL.COM



SUNSET ON THE EVERGLADES

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