

CHILDREN & FAMILY Activities

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Ollie, Florida Scenic Highway's mascot, and his friends know that kids love road



Indian River Lagoon



Pensacola Beach



Old Florida Heritage Highway

Family Fun

Children seem to grow up too fast. And given the hustle and bustle of daily life, time spent with them is even more precious. Traveling Florida's Scenic Highways is a great way to get to the state's many family-oriented destinations. Make the most of playtime and your budget -





1 Pensacola Scenic Bluffs

Looking for sun, fun and adventure? When you travel the **Pensacola Scenic Bluffs**, your family will have plenty of access to entertainment and recreational opportunities. If snorkeling is on your to-do list, check out the Gulf of Mexico's newest artificial reef – The Mighty Oriskany, a sunken naval air carrier that now provides an artificial habitat for sea life. Speaking of which, try letting the kids catch their own dinner (Pensacola offers great fishing). Or take a short drive over the Pensacola Bay and get a close-up experience with more than 900 animals – including many endangered species – at the Zoo at Gulf Breeze (located at 5701 Gulf Breeze Parkway). How about a little history lesson? The Historic Pensacola Village, located at the southern terminus of the **Pensacola Scenic Bluffs** at 120 Church Street, features several museums that display historic artifacts and pieces of Americana and West Florida history, as well as a hands-on children's exhibit.

2 Old Florida Heritage Highway

The **Old Florida Heritage Highway** offers the traveling family 48 miles of opportunities for fun and education. Take your little "wild things" to some of Central Florida's wild spaces. Hike, paddle a canoe, ride a horse or camp in one of the area's many state and locally designated parks and nature preserves. Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park, just south of Gainesville, offers biological, geological and historic uniqueness. Designated in 1971, Paynes Prairie became Florida's first state preserve. While there, join one of the ranger-led activities – or check out one of the park's eight trails for hiking, biking or horseback riding. If you like festivals and want to get a jump start on your Christmas shopping, check out the Micanopy Fall Harvest Festival. Usually held the last weekend in October, it brings together vendors from around Southeast Florida selling arts and crafts, as well as providing live music and tasty treats. This event has been livening up the sleepy little Town of Micanopy for the last 35 years and will surely be a great experience along your journey.

3 Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway

When your little "cubs" are ready to get out of the car, spend some time getting back to nature off the **Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway**. Although comprised of a network of intersecting roadways that run east to west and north to south, the Byway runs generally east and west along SR 40 between Silver Springs State Park and the City of Daytona Beach. The Byway also travels along SR 19 between Palatka to the north and Alexander Springs to the south. Along the way, the Ocala National Forest offers outdoor activities for any level of enthusiast. Take an easy hike or discover adventure on the newly established off-road and all-terrain vehicle trails. The Ocala National Forest offers 28 developed campground sites, as well as primitive campsites. Keep an eye out for bears, as this is bear country. To the west of the National Forest, Silver Springs State Park offers glass-bottom boat tours where you can float atop one of the largest spring systems in the world while watching schools of giant mullet. You may even spot a manatee! If a faster pace is more up your family's alley, take the Scenic Byway east to Daytona Beach – home of the Daytona International Speedway – the world's most famous beach.

4 Indian River Lagoon Treasure Coast Scenic Highway

Enjoy scenic views of the river on your journey along the **Indian River Lagoon Treasure Coast Scenic Highway**. This 42-mile Scenic Highway offers travelers opportunities to learn about cultural and natural history. If you're a naturalist or seek to inspire a respect for nature in your little ones, this is your place. Many wildlife and endangered bird refuges are accessible by this Scenic Highway. Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, just south of Cape Canaveral, offers camping, nature trails, fishing opportunities, an interpretive center and a view of "the real Florida." Visit Pelican Island, the nation's first wildlife refuge, and watch pelicans live peacefully in an area set aside for their protection by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1903. Keep your eyes open for our country's national bird, the bald eagle, as they hunt and nest in the area. And, don't forget your bathing suit and sunscreen, as there are plenty of beaches along this highway. Merritt Island is also a water sports paradise, offering swimming, sailboarding, kayaking, snorkeling, parasailing and waterskiing. If you'd like to view more wildlife, such as the beautiful and endangered manatee, non-motorized crafts are available for rental. Just south of Cape Canaveral, wow the kids by taking them to Cocoa Beach where they can interact with friendly wild dolphins, splash on the beach and explore the underwater world just offshore while snorkeling.



For your next roadtrip, be sure to print coloring pages of our Florida Scenic Highway mascots,