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The Beaches: Atlantic, Jacksonville, Neptune, Mayport

One drive down A1A or Third Street and you will be hooked on the beach lifestyle of the First Coast.

Whether you're in Atlantic Beach, Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach or Mayport, there is a feeling that feels your soul. Cool fall breezes, surfing, fishing, shopping and family fun await you in all the beach communities.

While at the beaches, make sure you visit the new Jacksonville Beach fishing pier on North First Street. At 1,300 feet in length and 16 feet wide, this is a choice spot for taking in great views of the sand and surf or casting a line and trying your hand at landing a big fish.

The skyline at the beaches is changing as more and more condominiums are developed along the shoreline. In recent years, older hotels have been razed to make way for newer, trendy upscale beachfront condos.

As you drive north on A1A, make sure you enter the "Town Center" area in Atlantic Beach at the foot of Atlantic Boulevard. This charming shopping and entertainment district is "New Florida" at its best. Brick pavers on the streets, attractive landscaping and seaside architecture give the area a dash of old world cool mixed with modern day pizzazz you can't find anywhere else on the First Coast.

The past decade has brought with it some dramatic and positive changes to Jacksonville Beach. City leaders say the most notable change in Jacksonville Beach's downtown was created with the redevelopment of 12 acres of city-owned land in the area bounded by Beach Boulevard, 3rd Street, 1st Avenue North, and the boardwalk.

This massive redevelopment project involved construction of a new City Hall, the Latham Plaza public open space, the SeaWalk Pavilion outdoor performance stage, and a 200-car parking facility.

The SeaWalk Pavilion plays host to such annual events as Fiesta Players, the Annual Opening of the Beaches and the popular Springing the Blues Festival.

Look for a similar redevelopment effort to get underway soon in Mayport. Once a sleepy fishing village, this beaches community is set up to get its own "Town Center" and other upgrades in the coming years.



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