



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Thomas Jung

Orlando for Couples

Orlando, 4 Days

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Guide Description






AUTHOR NOTE: While theme parks definitely take up a lot of square footage in Orlando, they're absolutely not the only diversion. Couples seeking a few days together to connect will enjoy this four day itinerary packed with pretty places and serene spots that are, for the most part, away from the theme parks. Downtown Orlando has much to offer in the way of eclectic dining and posh lodgings. Don't miss a trip to Winter Park's famed Park Avenue for a stroll down its brick paved street lined with luxe boutiques and quaint eateries. Spend a hedonistic day enjoying spa treatments and sunshine at their adults-only pool area. Head to Downtown Disney for some exciting nightlife including the world famous Cirque de Soleil show called La Nouba. When it comes to planning a romantic getaway in Orlando, the possibilities are endless.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife







Day 1 - Orlando

DAY NOTE: Check into the Grand Bohemian in the late afternoon and spend a few hours perusing its million dollar collection of original art that is smattered all around this gorgeous boutique hotel. Hang by the heated pool or arrange for an in-room massage. For dinner and drinks, there's really no need to venture out; the hotel's restaurant is known for artfully delicious plates and martinis don't get any prettier inside the Bosendorfer Lounge where live jazz plays seven nights each week.

	The Westin Grand Bohemian European-style hotel
	Bosendorfer Lounge One of the city's trendiest spots
	Bosendorfer Lounge Rare commodity


Day 2 - Orlando

DAY NOTE: For breakfast... hungry tummies will be expertly satisfied with tasty omelets at Dexter's, about a fifteen-minute walk from the Grand Bohemian past the picturesque Lake Eola Park. Lake Eola is undeniably Orlando's most beautiful outdoor space thanks to its towering palms and serene white and black swans. This ideal picnic spot with its famous fountain in the center is also home to a funky Sunday farmer's market which boasts live music and a beer garden. Hop in the car and head to Harry P. Leu Gardens for an afternoon picnic. This expansive botanical garden offers plenty of private little alcoves to escape to as well as lots of shade on sweltering days. Then, catch an indie or foreign film at The Enzian, where fascinating films are served up along side a full menu of nibbles. A warm chocolate chip cookie served with a glass of chardonnay is my favorite snack to nosh. Finally, head back downtown to Church Street Station for wine and decadent desserts at The Dessert Lady. This notorious baker is practically a local celebrity and her creations grace the tables at many of the best restaurants in town. Afterwards, escape to the South Beach-esque Sky Bar where breezy white curtains enclose private cabanas. Sip martinis and listen to loungey DJ music in this petite club under the stars. At night's end, have a rickshaw dash you back to the Bohemian. Hop in the car and head to Harry P. Leu Gardens for an afternoon picnic. This expansive botanical garden

	Dexter's of Thornton Park An American/Continental favorite
	Harry P. Leu Gardens 50-acre botanical garden
	Enzian Theater Dinner and a flick
	The Dessert Lady Unbelievably delicious
	Sky 60 It's time to party
	The Westin Grand Bohemian European-style hotel

Day 3 - Orlando

DAY NOTE: Start your day with breakfast on the famous Park Avenue in Winter Park. Known for its notable Saturday farmer's market, Park Avenue is THE spot for fashionista finds and 'see and be seen' cafes and wine bars. Briar Parch is a favorite in Orlando owing to its gigantic breakfast menu. Burn off a calorie-loaded breakfast with a stroll along the Avenue. There are a number of great spots for lunch including Hot Olives, which is a short walk from Park Avenue in an area called 'Hannibal Square'. Learn more at www.hannibalsquare.com. Later in the day, travel over to Downtown Disney where an unforgettable Cirque du Soleil show awaits plus dinner at one of the coolest eateries in town - The House of Blues. Before or after the show, Downtown Disney is an enjoyable shopping and dining district.

	The Westin Grand Bohemian European-style hotel
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Day 4 - Orlando

DAY NOTE: There's no need to plan anything beyond a trip to the spa at the Ritz-Carlton Grande Lakes. This full day of total relaxation will take your breath away and leave you feeling completely blissed out. Enjoy lunch in your cozy pool-side lounge or try one of several restaurants at the Ritz or the

Itinerary Overview

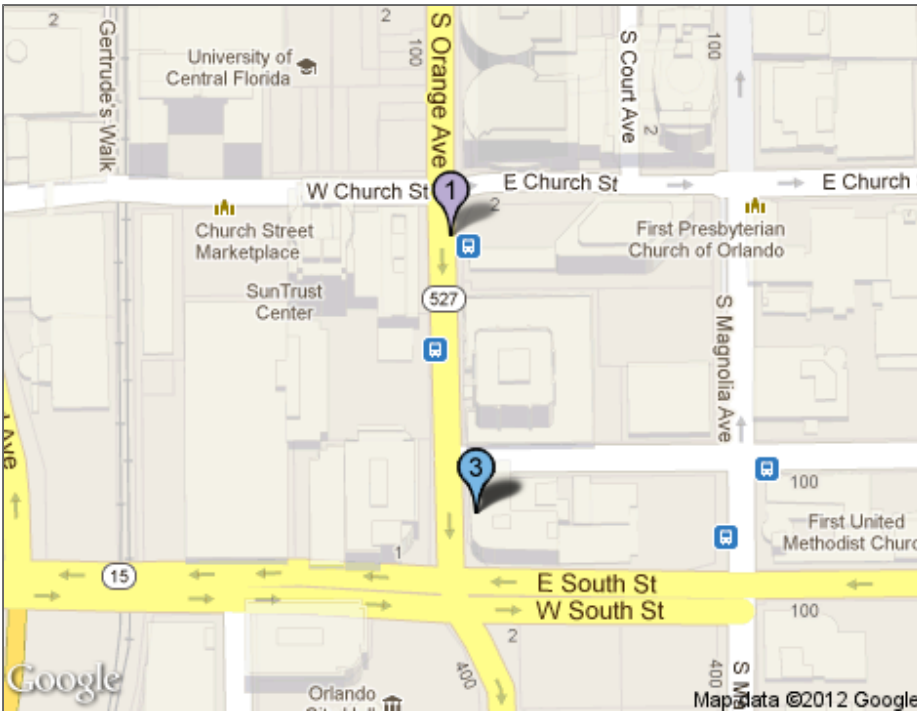
things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

neighboring JW Marriott. From sun up to sun down, this is the place to be.



Ritz-Carlton Spa (The)
Hotel luxury

Day 1 - Orlando



QUICK NOTE

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contact:
tel: +1 407 313-9000
<http://www.grandbohemianhotel.com/>

location:
325 South Orange Avenue
Orlando FL 32801

1 The Westin Grand Bohemian

DESCRIPTION: Rich tones exude a sense of warmth at this luxury hotel. Each of the rooms are bedecked with tasteful and comfortable furniture. If you crave more than the average deal, you could check into one of the concierge-level abodes, up on the 15th floor. Here's where you get to access a Bose CD Wave stereo, radio and an exclusive lounge. 24-hour facilities include the fitness center, dining and parking. Couples on a romantic getaway may avail of the Jacuzzi suites—designed to ignite a few sparks. The hotel's Boheme restaurant offers excellent steaks, while the Bosendorfer Lounge is the perfect place for a drink with friends. An on-site Starbucks coffee store will keep you fueled all day long. Families with kids will enjoy taking a walk to the nearby theme parks, while art enthusiasts can spend a few productive hours in the Grand Bohemian Gallery.

MY NOTE: This is where visiting NBA players usually stay so don't be surprised if you see a sports celeb or two!



contact:

tel: 407 313 9000
fax: +1 407 313 9001
http://www.grandbohemianhotel.com/theboheme/bos_home.asp

location:

325 South Orange Avenue
Orlando FL 32801

hours:

Su-W 11a-midnight, Th
11a-1a, F-Sa 11a-2a

2 Bosendorfer Lounge

DESCRIPTION: Voted 'Best Place to Sip Martinis' by the Orlando Business Journal and 'Best Hotel Bar 2002' by Orlando Weekly, this lounge, located in the Westin Grand Bohemian Hotel, is one of the city's trendiest spots. Its original works of art, more than anything else, make it worth a visit. It also houses a Grand Bösendorfer piano - one of only two in the world. Check out the nightly specials - classics on Tuesdays, blues on Thursdays and contemporary Jazz on Friday and Saturdays. And once you've had your share of art and music, feast on hand-crafted appetizers and specialty cocktails. © wcities.com



photo courtesy of Bosendorfer Lounge

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tel: 407 313 9000
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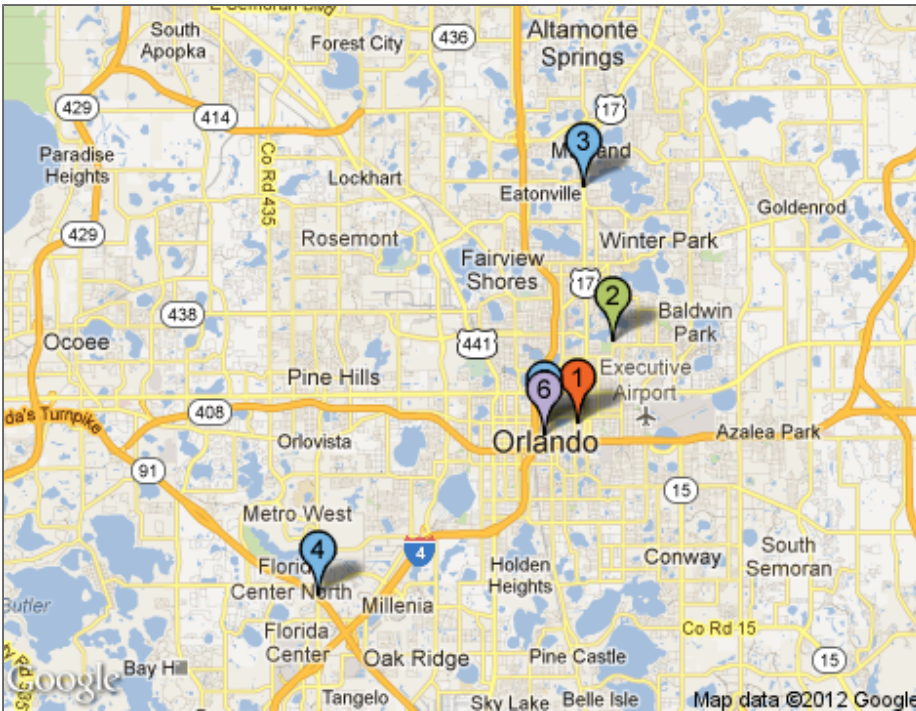
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photo courtesy of Bosendorfer Lounge

Day 2 - Orlando



QUICK NOTE

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contact:

tel: 1 407 648 2777
fax: 1 407 648 0630
www.dexwine.com

location:

808 East Washington Street
Orlando FL 32801

hours:

M-Th 11a-10p, F-Sa 11a-11p,
Su 10a-10p

1 Dexter's of Thornton Park

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

make sure to arrive before 11am on Sunday if you want to partake in lunch. It get's really busy after that.

DESCRIPTION: Dexter's of Thornton Park is a hip and laid-back diner-esque eatery in the heart of downtown. Best known for it's Sunday brunch, Dexter's is usually packed with the young and the hip who have just crawled out of



citysearch

bed to nurse their hangovers with Bloody Mary's and several different varieties of Mimosas, including orange, mango, and passion fruit.

Leave your diet at home when you come to Dexter's and let yourself indulge in one of the many tasty options on their brunch menu. The omelets are great, as well as the blueberry and cream cheese stuffed French toast. Portions are generous and the food is hearty and unpretentious. If brunch isn't your fancy, there are many sandwiches, salads and pasta dishes to try instead.

Dexter's is, quite simply, a really cool place to hang out. The service and the food are good, but I believe it's the groovy ambiance that has made this restaurant so successful. The servers are sassy, there's a good beat in the background, and the walls are covered with an eclectic mixture of original art (available for purchase).

Even though Dexter's attracts a group of local regulars, it's definitely not a snobby environment. Most of the patrons are too busy thinking about how they look to care about how you look. Don't just take my word for it. Look up Dexter's of Thornton Park on the Web and you'll find that it ranks in the top ten of every Best Sunday Brunch list out there, and usually gets at least a nod by the Orlando Sentinel in their Annual Foodie Awards. Don't forget, Lake Eola and the Sunday Eola Market are just a short stroll away... perfect for walking off a great meal.

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contact:

tel: 407/246-2620

fax: +1 407 246 2849

<http://www.leugardens.org>

location:

1920 N. Forest Ave
Orlando FL 32803

hours:

Gardens daily 9am-5pm;
house daily 10am-4pm
(closed during July)

2 Harry P. Leu Gardens

DESCRIPTION: This 50-acre botanical garden is Orlando's equivalent to The Secret Garden: a maze bursting with color and unusual greenery. At Leu Gardens take a guided tour of the southern-styled grounds, chill at a concert or just run amok through the giant bamboo stalks, hyper-manicured lawns and Camellias (they have the world's largest collection). Better yet, its location on the shores of Lake Rowena affords a fitting view of the sunset.

© Frommer's

MY NOTE: On the first Friday of each month, Leu Gardens presents their DATE NIGHT and shows a romantic film on a giant screen in the gardens. Feel free to bring a dinner basket and wine... and don't forget the corkscrew. Leu Gardens also hosts jazz concerts a few times each year. These concerts are a local favorite and tickets sell out quickly.

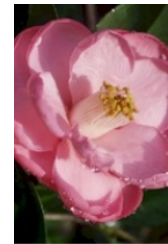


photo courtesy of Harry P. Leu Gardens

contact:
tel: 407/629-1088
www.enzian.org

3 Enzian Theater

DESCRIPTION: This full-time, not-for-profit alternative cinema features first-run, first-rate independent films in a 250-seat theater outfitted with a 33-foot screen. The Enzian also hosts a variety of special events, including March's 10-day run of the Florida Film Festival. © Frommer's



Photo courtesy of Enzian.

location:
1300 S. Orlando Ave
Maitland FL 32751

hours:
Show times vary; Call for details

MY NOTE: Check out The Enzian's calendar online to see if any free film screenings are scheduled outside in Winter Park. They call this free film series Popcorn and Flicks.

contact:
tel: (407) 999-5696
http://dessertlady.com/

4 The Dessert Lady

DESCRIPTION: This Church Street version of The Dessert Lady's legendary dessert and wine cafe is perfectly situated for post-dinner pit stops or nights where dinner is skipped and you head straight for dessert. While slices may be pricey (\$9+), each tiny morsel is packed with the finest ingredients creating what will likely be the best dessert you've ever tasted. Favorites like carrot cake and pecan pie grace the menu as well as a bevy of Zen-like chocolate indulgences that will satisfy any chocoholic. Pair your treat with a glass of wine or champagne or opt for a latte as you drink in the artful decor that's just as decadent as the menu.
© NileGuide



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location:
120 W Church St
Orlando FL 32801

hours:
Tu-Sa 11:30a-11p; Su 1p-9p

contact:
tel: 407 246 1599
fax: +1 407 648 0509
http://www.sky60.com/

5 Sky 60

DESCRIPTION: A hip spot for singles, Sky 60 is one of Orlando's hottest nightclubs. It's primarily the lighting that lends this club a very stylish look. Shake a leg to some pulsating beats from the DJ's kitty; if you wish to spend some intimate moments, book one of the private cabanas. Tired of your single status? Keep your eyes open while you tuck into some drinks - you just might spot someone special! © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Sky 60.

location:
64 North Orange Avenue
Orlando FL 32801

hours:
M-F 5p-2a, Sa 8p-2a

MY NOTE: If a lightening storm is on the horizon (which happens pretty frequently in the summer) Sky 60 will be closed.

contact:
tel: +1 407 313-9000
http://www.grandbohemianhotel.com/

6 The Westin Grand Bohemian

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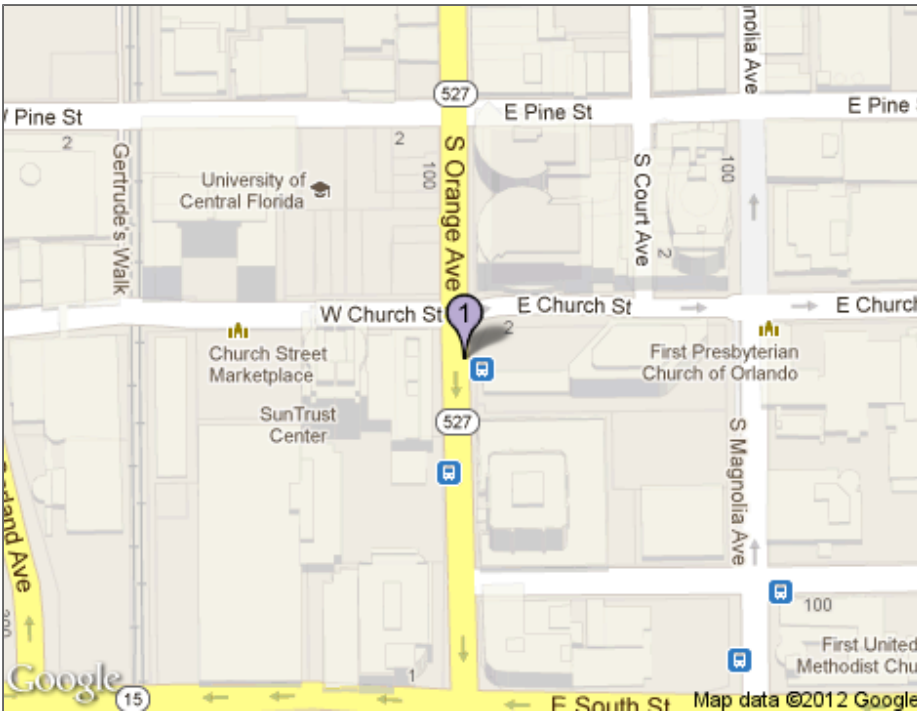


location:
325 South Orange Avenue
Orlando FL 32801

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Day 3 - Orlando



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Day 4 - Orlando



QUICK NOTE

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contact:

tel: +1 407 206 2400 (Hotel)
fax: +1 407 206 2401 (Hotel)
http://www.ritzcarlton.com/resorts/orlando_grande_lakes/

location:

4012 Central Florida Parkway
Orlando FL 32837

hours:

Call for details

1 Ritz-Carlton Spa (The)

DESCRIPTION: A big name, 40,000 square feet of tranquility, 40 treatment rooms, a heated lap pool, a Carita salon, boutique and a wellness center—sounds like the spa at The Ritz-Carlton Orlando, Grande Lakes resort. With the extensive range of treatments and services for both men and women at hand, you will emerge a new person. The Beauty Queen and Diva Packages live up to their names, while the toning massages liven up those tired limbs. Choose from a plethora of indulgences at the spa or the wellness center, enjoy the attentive efficient service, and watch the ol' bod get energized, just as your wallet gets depleted! © wcities.com

MY NOTE: If you book a fitness class or inexpensive service such as a manicure, the \$40 day fee is waived. The day fee gives you access to the outdoor pool area as well as the indoor hot tub, steam room, and jacuzzi.



Photo courtesy of Ritz-Carlton Spa (The)

Orlando Snapshot

Local Info

Think of Orlando and the picture of an iconic, cheerful mouse is sure to come to mind. Disney World not only sprawls across hundreds of acres of land in Lake Buena Vista, located in Orlando's southwest, its impact on Orlando tourism has been even more sweeping. If not for the explosion of Disney World, perhaps neighboring megaparks like Universal Studios and SeaWorld may never have been born.

No doubt, most vacationers come to Orlando for the theme parks, and for good reason. There is more family fun packed into every square inch of Orlando than possibly anywhere else on the planet. From heart-dropping roller coasters to unforgettable live shows, Orlando's expansive parks are worth every penny of their admission price. Orlando offers an easy vacation for families- it's easy to get around, easy to find something to do, and easy to fly in and out of.

The standard week-long vacation is not even close to enough time to truly experience Orlando. A family could spend their entire stay within Disney World and still would only uncover a fraction of the delightful diversions available. Besides days spent inside Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Animal Kingdom, and the recently renamed Hollywood Studios (formerly MGM Studios), visitors can also book themed dinners with beloved characters, rent watercraft for

traversing Disney's inner waterways, visit two Disney water parks, and take behind-the-scene tours... and this still would only scratch Disney's surface. You wouldn't want to miss shopping and dining at Downtown Disney, as well as shows like Cirque du Soleil's La Nouba and the House of Blues's Gospel Brunch.

Those who manage to break from Disney's tender grip are quickly swallowed up at Universal Studios and Islands of Adventure. These two parks are packed with spectacular rides as well as a huge entertainment, shopping and dining complex known as CityWalk. And the fun doesn't stop there.

Yet, there is life beyond the theme parks. While it's difficult to compete with the color and gusto of Disney and its neighbors, there's actually a lot happening outside of the theme park zone. Downtown's walkable streets offer a robust dining and nightlife scene as well as some unique boutiques and a handful of theaters and museums.

When the locals grow weary of the theme parks, which they quickly do, they're more likely to be found strolling around Lake Eola Park that boasts the famed fountain and amphitheater. Here you'll find a few popular eateries hugging its shores, a place to rent swan boats, and an awesome Sunday farmer's market crowded with downtown hipsters enjoying its beer garden and live bands.

Winter Park, with its posh boutiques, million-dollar homes, and chic cafes and restaurants is also a superb spot for an afternoon of strolling, shopping and snacking. Even non-shoppers love Winter Park thanks to its museums, scenic boat tours, and well-manicured park spaces.

Wherever you spend your time during your Orlando visit, you'll likely describe Orlando locals as friendly and unpretentious. Orlando isn't a big city like New York or LA, and it knows it. Sure, Orlando people glam it up at nightclubs and can spend wads of cash like any big city slicker, but they're not a snobby bunch. They're used to sharing their space with visitors and can be amiable and obliging if you're ever in need of a local tip.

Besides theme parks, I-Drive, and a handful of quaint urban corridors, the beach is just over an hour away. Cocoa and New Smyrna are closest and both are great for families, couples, and singles. Drive an extra hour west and you'll be at the Gulf. In fact, Orlando is one of the best starting off points for any Florida-exploring vacation. The airport is a direct flight from every major city in North America and there is so much more to see within a two to three hour drive of this great city.

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