

Tourism Activity Report

March 2025

Mission Statement

Created by the Nassau County Board of County Commissioners in 1988, the Amelia Island Tourist Development Council (AITDC) oversees the development and marketing of Amelia Island as a world-class tourism destination. As provided by Florida law, the AITDC is responsible for the expenditure of revenues received from the levy and imposition of the tourism development tax.

The goals of the AITDC are to generate visitation to Amelia Island and its attractions/special events, thereby increasing tax revenues, including sales taxes and those imposed on the hospitality industry. In turn, those tax revenues may be used to improve the quality of life for the citizens of the community, provide support for beach re-nourishment, and ensure a viable hospitality industry.

The key marketing focus areas of Amelia Island TDC are:

Events & Promotions:

- Visitor Services
- Partnership Meetings
- Travel & Trade
- Special Events

Marketing:

- Operations
- Strategy
- Website & Digital
- Content & Social
- Collateral

Public Relations:

- Writers & Influencers
- Press & Outreach
- Communication
- Promotions

Events & Promotions

Overview

Despite emerging from a significantly cold January and February, the Month of March recognized a resounding rebound in visitation driven by Spring Break seasonality as well as the strength of The Amelia Concours d'elegance event in the destination.

Visitor Services

March 2025 – Number of Visitors – 3,526; Number of Welcome Bags Prepared – 92

On-Going Operations: Prepare welcome packets for meetings and tours, check hotel availability, assist visitors with area information and direction to visitors, encouraging first-time and repeat visitation, assist with dining, and hotel reservations, encouraging first-time and repeat visitation. Displays and distributes information of potential interest to guests including lodging activities and events. Assist conference groups with area information when needed.

Partner Relations

New [partner resource landing page on Ameliainsider.com](https://www.ameliainsider.com) has launched and is being well-referenced throughout our partner newsletters. The March Newsletter was sent on March 4 to 768 recipients and this issue had a 44% unique open rate (meaning 330 tourism partners open and read the content). The new partner contact management system is live and being updated in real time as partners change and businesses update. Heavy focus on adding day spa partners to our database as well as beginning to update dining partner listings.

Community Outreach and Program Development

In conjunction with Main Street and Nassau Council for Arts & Culture, plans are underway for the 1st annual Make Music Day in downtown Fernandina in late June.

Collaborated with Keep Nassau Beautiful on ecotourism efforts and followed up with Conserve Nassau partners to learn more about their priorities.

Continued discussions regarding signage at Bosque Bello

Attended BOCC Winter Strategic Meeting and participated in holiday lighting conversation with City of Fernandina Beach and Main Street.

Represented the AICVB at the Take Stock in Children Gala

Planned and executed AICVB efforts for Destinations Florida Tourism Day in Tallahassee with local partners. Participated in the Value of Tourism expo for members of the Florida Legislature.

Travel & Trade – Meetings, Consumer, International

Since launching the Amelia Island Insider training platform in September within the TravPRO platform a total of 340 travel professionals have registered to take part in the training; 298 professionals have begun the training modules with a total of 151 professionals completing the certification as an Amelia Island Insider. A dedicated email was delivered to the TravPRO database of travel professionals to encourage module completion.

During the month of March, the CVB witnessed an increase in RFP submissions compared to a slowing that was witnessed in the previous 2 months. The CVB helped to facilitate a total of 43 RFPs while distributing them to accommodation partners able to consider the line of business within the allotted and targeted timing of the meeting.

Special Events

- o Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID) initiative and activation planning and organization.
- o Light Up Blue GMID initiative planned for week of March 31 with Ritz-Carlton, Residence Inn, Courtyard by Marriott, Hampton Inn Downtown, Omni Amelia Resort & Spa, and Welcome Center participation.
- o Holiday Lighting meeting with WeDecorate, City of Fernandina, and Main Street to determine new plan considering city improvements and new lighting options.
- o Meetings with Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival and Keep Nassau Beautiful organizers to discuss sponsorship funding for new initiatives.
- o Review, recommendation, and submission of TDC sponsorship funding applications for Amelia Island Dance Festival, Nassau Sports Fishing Association, North Florida Bicycle Club, Omni Amelia Island Resort & Spa, Keep Nassau Beautiful.
- o Initial marketing meeting for Amelia Island Cookout 2025 to identify additional avenues for promoting the event with overnight visitation packages.
- o Meetings with AVL and Mocama for Dickens on Centre proposals.
- o Fielded and responded to 12 wedding inquiries from website and office calls.
- o Review applications for TDC sponsorship funding from Right Whale Festival, Fernandina Beach Main Street, and Light Up Amelia.
- o Wrote a brief and pitched a “Special Event and Lodging Partner Networking Forum” bringing together event organizers and lodging partners in an effort to increase overnight visitation during events.

Marketing

Operations

- o Ongoing work on PO requisitions, tracking, invoice processing, managing FY 25 budget including reallocations and incremental spending and final billing
- o Ongoing work on FY25 budgeting and forecasting based on actual TDT collections, plans and market conditions.

Strategy

- o During the month of March, the destination identified an emerging threat to future visitation from both international and domestic markets. Although the immediate outlook for March and April remained strong, early signs of disruption began to surface—particularly within the Canadian source market, where growing tensions signaled potential declines in upcoming

- travel. Simultaneously, signs of domestic economic instability began to take shape, suggesting a decline in consumer confidence and a potential softening in future bookings.
- Given the critical financial importance of the spring and summer travel seasons, the CVB initiated strategic planning to reassess and reallocate its media budget for the remainder of the year. The objective was to maximize impact and drive visitation during this key period, ensuring the destination remained resilient amid evolving market challenges.
 - In response to emerging potential threats, the organization has decided to undertake a comprehensive brand analysis and destination perception study. This initiative is designed to generate valuable insights that will inform the development of the next generation of our brand communications and campaign creative. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the destination is strategically and competitively positioned to navigate challenges and capitalize on opportunities in the coming year.
 - The team actively participated in the annual Tourism Day in Tallahassee on March 26th, joining destination marketing organizations (DMOs) from across Florida to collectively advocate for the tourism industry. The event provided an opportunity to engage with elected officials in both the House and Senate, reinforcing the vital economic role tourism plays in the state's prosperity. Unfortunately, neither Representative Black nor Senator Yarborough were available to meet with our delegation during the scheduled day. This was not an isolated occurrence—approximately 80% of participating destinations reported similar difficulties in securing meetings with their respective elected officials. This widespread lack of access led to growing discomfort among attendees and sparked speculation regarding potential legislative initiatives that could impact the tourism sector.
 - The team continued to closely monitor future booking pace as all indicators lead the industry to be extremely cautious for the year ahead.
 - Provide ongoing strategic direction on the brand vision and marketing execution
 - Analyze weekly STR report and KeyData information and distribute performance report to stakeholders weekly.
 - FY25 media plan monitoring and optimization across all media channels including digital and social channels
 - Approve creative executions for media program rollouts – updating creative for Brand, SEM, social and niche marketing
 - Refresh appropriate marketing executions to avoid wear out in paid media and social
 - Dedicated Meetings support launched and ongoing via digital media and e-marketing
 - Partner Cooperative plans customized and bespoke by partner – finalized and approved for 9 separate partners. Finalized publication insertion orders, submitted County paperwork and generated 90+ partner invoices. Coordinated with Clerk and SMB office key contacts.
 - Local planning and media purchasing in development supporting events as a key brand pillar and in conjunction with key strategic partners
 - Ongoing optimization of partner coop programs; coordination with external publishers, agency and internal stakeholders for AICVB dedicated email marketing program plus creative support to partners needing help in developing promotions and materials.

- Continuous review, optimization and execution of cross-channel Marketing Dashboard for content, blog and email messaging including SEM strategy and partner support
- Ongoing meetings, weddings and group program creative including leveraging partner content
- Ongoing Inspiration Guide distribution to key consumer touchpoints and to fulfillment house along with dedicated envelope and sticker aligned with brand strategy.
- Broad launch of Discovery Guide as in-market collateral resource for visitors looking for activities, shopping, nature and beach safety

Website & Digital









- Launched Ameliasland.com on WordPress CMS platform 10/1/23
- Launched email leisure program with Starmark support on 10/1/23 consisting of 3-4 emails per month targeted at the leisure consumer
- Dedicated Meetings and Weddings website redesign and optimization ongoing.
- Ongoing creative design, development and launch of AICVB dedicated email marketing program
- Meeting email messaging program targeting three key targets: planners, tour operators and international travel agents launched
- Continuous update of Calendar of Events featuring Festivals & Events, plus Activities
- Design and development of custom, targeted landing pages to key messaging targets: Meeting Planners, Tour Operators and Travel Agents, plus Press.
- Developed and launched Partner Portal as part of universal footer – moving key industry data, Value of Visitors and links to other marketing support materials.
- Developed key functionality to expand user experience: Beach Bag favoriting plus the opportunity to share your Beach Bag social with friends; On-island customer homepage featuring key information best for optimizing the on-island experience. Added key communications components to Arts & Culture and Foodie Travel Guide to highlight key events interesting to that vertical target.
- Ongoing work on database management and optimization – continual monitoring and optimizing of Welcome series to incorporate demographics and psychographics of existing base for further targeting, increasing data collection and adding new 1st party data subscribers
- Identified key messaging verticals by month to leverage communications across blogs, email, website and social media to drive business across key segments and holiday and cultural events. March is Family month with St. Patrick's Day (3/17), and Mardi Gras/Fat Tuesday (3/4) as national holidays plus Daylight Savings Time (3/9), International Women's Day (3/8) and Pi Day (3/14) in the month
- Blogs in March: What's New on Amelia Island; From A-Z: 26 Things to See and Do in Historic Downtown; Ways to Celebrate Easter and Springtime on Amelia Island; Activities on Water –

Let's Make Waves; Multi-Generational Fun on Amelia Island; Spring Blossoms: The Best Sports for Wildflowers and Garden Walks on Amelia Island.

- Emails in March: SURF & SAND exclusive; From A-Z: 26 Things to See and Do in Historic Downtown/HAMPTON INN inclusion/Activities on Water – Let's Make Waves; THE RITZ-CARLTON, AMELIA ISLAND exclusive.

Content & Social

Full report can be found in board book

Profile	Audience	Net Audience Growth	Published Posts	Impressions	Engagements	Engagement Rate (per Impression)	Video Views
Reporting Period Mar 31, 2024 – Mar 31, 2025	175,790	15,334	1,659	95,515,321	2,299,103	2.4%	20,393,377
 @AmeliasIslandFlo	3,308	90	75	19,237	1,042	5.4%	45
 Amelia Island	121,302	8,514	280	90,229,527	2,208,650	2.4%	8,800,935
 Amelia Island, Florida	1,387	192	18	20,909	4,702	22.5%	0
 Amelia Island, Florida	2,584	993	69	297,106	9,060	3%	297,106
 Visit Amelia Island	622	29	52	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
 Visit Amelia Island	1,150	114	15	N/A	1,456	N/A	10,672,325
 visitameliaisland	39,360	5,272	1,124	4,948,542	74,056	1.5%	622,966
 visitameliaisland	6,077	130	26	N/A	137	N/A	N/A

Collateral

Approximately 12,100 pieces of collateral were delivered to tourism partner businesses.

Approximately 652 inspiration guides were requested online and shipped directly to home addresses in the month. 299 of these were a result in a Visit Florida partnership.

Public Relations

Writers/Influencers

- Hosted iHeartRadio 106.7 LiteFM host Christine Nagy (Feb. 28-March 3).
- Finalized itinerary and hosted Lyndsay Almeida/influencer (March 19-21).
- Finalized itinerary and hosted Lizzie Valenti/theclevelandbucketlist (March 22-25).

Amelia Island Tourist Development Council

- Connected with, created itinerary, and hosted Chantel McCabe/Global Traveler Magazine ahead of “Best Island in the U.S.” article (March 23-24).
- Connected with, created itinerary, and hosted Karen Bartlett/ Neapolitan Family Magazine/ Old Naples News and North Naples News (March 27-29).
- Started planning media visit for Renata Parker/TALK Magazine.
- Connected with Brian Kirwood/briantreks and started discussing potential media visit.
- Connected with Amy H/themagnoliamom and started discussing potential media visit.
- Continued planning spring media FAM for May.
 - Finalized sample itinerary.
 - Created invite copy, graphic and RSVP form.
 - Created media list and sent invitations.
 - Started securing media: Laura Kate Whitney/Good Grit Magazine.
 - Eric Barton unable to attend, started planning individual visit (Sept. 2-4).
- Discussing paid media visit with Matador Network Content Creator. Client reviewing rates.
- Client presented CrowdRiff UGC paid program. Reviewing.

Press/Outreach

- Met with VISIT FLORIDA for run-through and executed Visit Florida Family Satellite Media Tour (March 12).
- Drafted and distributed 2025 Spring Events on Amela Island release.
- Drafted and distributed Atlanta Spring Break pitch with local lodging deals.
- Continued planning for IPW in June.
- Pitched Isle of Eight Flags Shrimp Fest 60th Anniversary to Southern Living/Coastal Living.
- Submitted pitch to freelancer for The Muse Magazine lead, Best Places for Women to Travel Solo this Summer.
- Submitted pitch to freelancer for Southern Living leads, Florida Getaways Only Locals Know About and Best Seafood Dives in Florida.
- Submitted pitch to freelancer for National Geographic Traveler lead, Detour Destinations.
- Submitted image to USA Today 10Best for upcoming Best Summer Travel Destination contest.
- Submitted Quick Trip to Tourism Marketing Today about 106.7 LITE FM’ Christine Nagy’s visit.

Promotional / Partnerships

- Presented revised TV promotional proposal with WSB-TV, client declined.
- Continued planning TV promotional proposal with Sinclair/FOX 8 Cleveland for in-destination remote broadcast.
 - Met with FOX 8 to discuss proposal.
 - Negotiated proposal and presented to client. Decided to proceed.
 - Met with FOX 8 to discuss four segments, travel expenses, etc.

- o Started planning remote broadcast / media visit with host Natalie Herbick (June 2-4).
- Continued planning partnership with ACC Aviation for Amelia Island Cookout (Oct.).
 - o Met with ACC and The Ritz.
 - o Drafted proposal for partnership and shared with The Ritz.
- Started planning Austin x Amelia inaugural flight (Oct.) campaign.
 - o Met with client and StarMark. Holding for client to meet with JIA (JAX).
- Reached out to Jax Jumbo Shrimp about activation for Isle of Eight Flags Shrimp Festival. No response.

Misc.

- Vetting reactive requests and passing if applicable.
- Bi-weekly meetings with AICVB.
- Provided activity and publicity reports.
- Share press visit coverage with partners.