



SEA BREEZE MANOR BED & BREAKFAST INN

GULFPORT, FLORIDA

by Carol Cortright
Photography by Kathleen Cabble



The waterfront town of Gulfport, Florida, nestled between St. Petersburg and the beaches, is home to candy-colored cottages and a laid-back “old Florida” charm that is nothing if not the mantra of the Sea Breeze Manor Bed and Breakfast Inn. If you’re looking for a getaway that includes gently waving palm trees and casual island elegance, look no further. Innkeeper and owner Lori Rosso is also a hostess par excellence, putting to good use her years of experience in Washington, D.C. as a travel and special event coordinator for executives, government officials and even the President of the United States.

The Sea Breeze Manor offers guests a quintessential Florida experience with the timeless appeal of a historic Inn. This rambling 1923 property overlooking Boca Ciega Bay is the color of a stormy sea with bold touches of sunny yellow and red trim and crisp white lattice, wrapped in a jun-

gle of bird of paradise, banana trees, ferns and other flora. At the Sea Breeze Manor, “something’s always blooming,” says Rosso, pointing out clusters of pearly shell gin-

▼ Enjoy afternoon refreshments in the living room



ger and peach hibiscus flowers adorning the courtyard. The facility includes four luxury suites in the main house and two adjoining cottages just off the verdant garden. Well-behaved canine guests are welcome to stay in the cottages. “Gulfport is a dog-friendly town,” she says.

Rosso makes sure that as soon as her visitors step over the threshold, every detail will be taken care of with expert precision. “I want them to just take a deep breath and unwind,” she says, “and they’ll soon feel like they’re in another place.”

The Sea Breeze Manor’s interior spaces mix British colonial – ornate antique pieces and gilt mirrors – with a whimsical and thoroughly Florida blend of tropical fabrics, seashells and bamboo accents. All the Caribbean themed suites offer comfortable luxury and plenty of room to breathe, with sitting areas and private balconies or patios overlooking the tropical courtyard or Boca Ciega Bay. The Manor is just a stone’s throw from a walk on the sugary sand and a dip in the sparkling water.

Accommodations come with a full



▲ The Key West Cottage has its own private entrance and a patio with a front row view of Boca Ciega Bay

▼ The Barbados is a luxurious bedroom with a private balcony and a fabulous view of the tropical garden





▲ The Key Largo Cottage features a king-size antique 1940's mahogany bed that has a perfect view of the bay



History of the Sea Breeze Manor and Innkeeper

One of Florida's grand old homes, Sea Breeze Manor was built in 1923, at a time when this part of Florida was known best as a winter playground for some of the world's best known writers, personalities and artisans. The spacious main two-story house was built in a classic Tudor style, perched on the edge of the boulevard overlooking the park bordering the sandy beach and shimmering aqua waters of Boca Ciega Bay.

A private residence up until 1996, Lawrence and Patty Burke acquired the

property and undertook a marvelous refurbishment. As building contractors in their previous careers, both Burkes



personally supervised the entire restoration and renovation of the residence, preserving every ounce of it's natural character and charm, yet updating it

with the latest modern conveniences. In 2002, the Burkes found an owner/innkeeper who would cherish their lovingly restored Manor, Lori Rosso.

Lori is a native of Long Island, New York. Having been raised on the beach she longed for the opportunity to return to the seashore. After 20 years in Washington, D.C. she decided it was time to put her expertise into a 'business of life' by combining her natural organizational and entertaining talents with an inn.



▲ Enjoy the lush, tropical gardens at the Sea Breeze Manor

breakfast spread each morning. There's always fresh fruit and juice, along with hot dishes from stuffed berry French toast to southwest hash browns and fried eggs, sausage strata, eggs Benedict, and other hearty fare to get the day started right. Port and sherry are available in the sitting room and soft drinks and snacks are provided as well.

The Sea Breeze Manor serves as the perfect backdrop for celebrating important occasions, from full-blown wedding weekends to family reunions. Romantic retreats complete with chilled champagne are popular as well. "Valentine's Day is a big deal here," Rosso notes, "with lots of special little touches." With the holidays right around the corner, it pays to note that a gift certificate for a restful mini-vacation is better than just about anything else you can tie a ribbon around.

Rosso loves Gulfport—something's always going on, from the twice-monthly Art Walks and community theater per-

formances to dancing at the historic Gulfport Casino five nights a week. Local treats also include the Taste of Gulfport, Gecko Fest and the Pink Flamingo Tour of Homes. There are plenty of charming antique shops, artsy boutiques and unique waterfront restaurants to visit, all within walking distance. "You can park your car and leave it for the whole weekend and never run out of things to do," she maintains. "But the absolute beauty of it is that you can do as much – or as blissfully little – as you want while you're here." **BBA**

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Bed & Breakfast Inn**
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AMENITIES & POLICIES



The Manor is pet friendly. The Key West and Key Largo cottages are available for small dogs if your puppy is friendly.

AREA ATTRACTIONS

The Sea Breeze Manor is adjacent to Gulfport Beach and offers great area dining and attractions. Go to their web site for a complete listing.

- Gulfport Beach
- Boca Ciega Bay
- Fort Desoto County Park
- Museum of Fine Arts
- Clam Bayou Nature Park
- St. Petersburg Museum of History

Surrounding Area:

- Sea World
- Disney World
- Universal Studios
- Busch Gardens, Tampa Bay
- The Florida Aquarium
- Lowry Park Zoo
- Seminole Hard Rock Casino
- Sunken Gardens



Gulfport, Florida Average Weather Statistics

	AVG HIGH	AVG LOW	AVG PREC
JAN	70°	53°	2.3 in
FEB	71°	54°	2.8 in
MAR	76°	59°	3.4 in
APR	81°	64°	1.6 in
MAY	86°	70°	2.6 in
JUN	89°	74°	5.7 in
JUL	90°	76°	7.0 in
AUG	90°	76°	7.8 in
SEP	89°	75°	6.1 in
OCT	84°	68°	2.5 in
NOV	77°	60°	1.9 in
DEC	72°	54°	2.2 in