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Gay Fort Lauderdale – the best gay  
hotels, resorts, bars, clubs & more

PASSPORT

Just 30 minutes north of [Miami](#), you'll find one of Florida's top LGBT destinations. Sure, you can soak up the sun in the likes of South Beach, but why not take it down a couple notches and relax in a far different scene. Yes, Miami is trendy, hip and fashionable – but Fort Lauderdale offers similar attractions with a more casual feel at lower prices.

Fort Lauderdale has never tried to be Miami, nor should it. With 23 miles of beaches, at least 50 LGBT popular establishments and the highest concentration of LGBT couples in the US, this city has something far different to offer. So, if you're looking for a warm weather destination with beaches and gay activities galore, then Fort Lauderdale might just be your ticket to the perfect gaycation.

### **General Tips**

It should come as no surprise that Fort Lauderdale boasts a lively gay neighborhood given its large population of LGBT residents. Wilton Manors is an area just northwest of downtown and it's here you'll find most of the LGBT-specific venues in town.

[Fort Lauderdale has also come out in front purposefully welcoming trans travelers](#), setting them apart from most LGBT-friendly destinations. The local authorities and tourism bureau have worked tirelessly over the past few years to better understand the specific needs of the trans community and ensure that their city has what it takes to provide for the community.

Fort Lauderdale long had a reputation of being a place where only the older generation of LGBT people came to live and visit. While there is still a thriving community of mid-age and retirees, the demographic of its residents and visitors has drastically shifted downward. These days there are plenty of 20 and 30-something year-olds that call Fort Lauderdale home or come to visit each year.

## Transportation & Airport Transfer

Fort Lauderdale has its own international airport, just a 15-20-minute drive to most parts of the city. Many hotels also have free shuttle service from the airport, so check before you arrive. If you fly into Miami, you can actually take the [Tri-Rail](#) from the airport to Fort Lauderdale. An Uber or Lyft ride from Miami airport to Fort Lauderdale will cost around \$25 – \$35 and takes 30-60 minutes depending on traffic.

It's worth noting that Fort Lauderdale isn't particularly walkable, so you'll likely need transportation to get around. The city recently installed a bike-share program, which allows visitors to easily rent a bike to get around the city. There are numerous stations located along the beachfront area of the city, and it's a great alternative to traveling by car. Visitors can skip the rental and between biking around or getting an [Uber](#) or [Lyft](#), you can experience all the city has to offer without the burden of a rental and parking.

## Fort Lauderdale Gay Hotels & Resorts

You'll find more gay hotels and resorts in Fort Lauderdale than just about any place on the planet. Second perhaps to [Palm Springs](#) on the West Coast, Fort Lauderdale boasts roughly 15 gay-specific guest houses, hotels and resorts. Accommodations are offered for a variety of budgets.

[The W Hotel Fort Lauderdale](#) – located right on the beach and offers excellent views from the outdoor terrace overlooking the beachfront. The rooftop pool offers panoramic views of the city as well as intracoastal views of the waterway, while the spa provides massages, manicures, and a number of other services. Las Olas Boulevard's unique shops and restaurants are 15-minute drive.



### *Clothing-Optional Hotels*

[Cheston House](#) – a clothing optional guesthouse set in the Fort Lauderdale Beach district. A balcony or patio are featured in certain rooms. The hotel also offers bike hire.

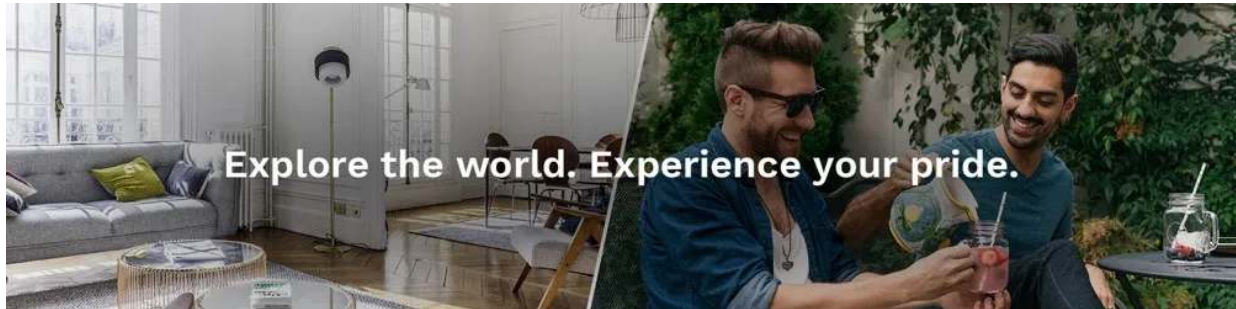
[Alcazar Resort](#) – Rooms have modern furnishings and room-darkening curtains. Some rooms include a fully equipped kitchenette and views of the pool. Alcazar guests can relax on a sun lounge poolside or visit the 12-man hot tub. The resort is a 5-minute walk from high-end shopping, restaurants and lively Sebastian Street.

[The Grand Resort](#) – 10 minutes' walk from Sebastian Street Gay Beach. Relax at the on-site spa, which offers massage services, hair studio, and nail care services. An on-site pool and hot tub are also featured. Wilton Manors is nearby, which offers numerous gay restaurants, attractions and clubs.

[Worthington Guesthouse](#) – this all-male gay resort is 5 blocks from Fort Lauderdale's Sebastian Beach. It offers a clothing optional courtyard with two 24-hour pools, a spacious hot tub and a modern gym. A continental breakfast is served daily at the hotel.

## Apartments

There are many sites for apartment rentals in Fort Lauderdale, with [AirBnB](#) probably being one of the most popular. Prices are generally comparable to budget hotels, especially if you're willing to get a room in a shared apartment. [Book AirBnB →](#)



There are even a few LGBT-oriented booking sites like [misterb&b](#) with listings from gay hosts for gay guests where you can either rent a whole apartment or a private room in a shared apartment. Understanding Fort Lauderdale's gay scene is much more easily done with the help of a local and apartment sharing is one of the best ways to meet someone living in the city who knows how things work, where and when are the best nights to go out, and what places to eat at and which to avoid.

### **Special Offer!**

Sign up with [AirBnB](#) or [misterb&b](#) and you will receive a free \$25 credit to use on your first booking!

[Join AirBnB](#) [Join misterb&b](#)

### **Sightseeing & Activities in Fort Lauderdale**

[The World AIDS Museum](#) – located in Wilton Manors, it's dedicated to telling the history of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The museum opened in 2013 and is the only museum worldwide dedicated solely to telling its story. It's funded entirely by donations and does an amazing job at telling the highly emotional history from the beginning until current times. The full tour takes a couple hours to complete but it's worth a quick stop if only to visit the highlights and see this remarkable feat in telling the story that has affected so many throughout the past few decades.



Buy a day pass – many of the gay-specific hotels and resorts offer day passes to visit their property and use their facilities. Just about every property comes equipped with a private pool (typically clothing optional) and you'll find a variety of additional facilities like spas, fitness centers, restaurants and more. If sleeping at a gay property isn't your style but you still want to socialize with the likes of those that do, then this is your ticket to get the best of both worlds. Day passes typically range in price from \$10 to \$35 per day.

Mansions and Water Taxis – Fort Lauderdale is home to plenty of rich and famous residents, and many of their elegant mansions can be seen from the deck of the [Fort Lauderdale Water Taxi](#). Spend an afternoon taking a quick ride along the banks of some of the most opulent homes around. After all, Fort Lauderdale is considered one of the yacht capitals of the world and many yacht owners call this city home.

[Hugh Taylor Birch State Park](#) – This park located just north of the beachfront area is a great place to escape the city and enjoy the outdoors. The park occupies 180 acres and is a favorite of locals to enjoy the outdoors and a perfect option if you've already had enough beach time. Go for a stroll through the preserved wildness or even rent a bike.

[Saw Grass Mills Outlet](#) – if you're a fan of luxury brands, then Fort Lauderdale has what you need. Just outside the city limits about 20 miles away, you'll find the outlet shopping center. The shopping mall is the largest luxury outlet center in the world, and you can find your favorite brands at reasonable prices, compared to normal stores. The center offers transportation from Fort Lauderdale via shuttle service, which you can catch at various Fort Lauderdale Beach Hotels.



Photo credit: Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau

## Restaurants and Cafes

[Rosie's Bar and Grill](#) is located in the heart of Wilton Manors and is a staple in the LGBT community. It's a place where people come together for Sunday brunch, evening dinner or weekend cocktails to enjoy a meal or a drink with like-minded residents and visitors looking to experience the best of the gayborhood. Rosie's is a must-visit establishment with friendly service, good food and delicious cocktails – we promise it doesn't disappoint!



Rosie's Bar & Grill / Photo credit: Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau

[The Yard](#) – An urban oasis in Wilton Manors amid beautiful Rainbow Eucalyptus trees hosts a variety of cafes and restaurants all with great outdoor seating. Favorites include Voo La Voo, Seed of Life Vegan Restaurant, Chateau D'vine Wine, Beer & Tapas and more. Take in the beauty of The Yard's murals while enjoying your time shopping, eating and relaxing.

[Galanga Thai Kitchen & Sushi Bar](#) – Asian fusion, sushi and Thai restaurant on Wilton Drive. The atmosphere is romantic yet stylish and contemporary. The servers are friendly and often quite good looking.

[J Mark's](#) – Informal restaurant with a diverse menu of American standards, a spacious patio and a buzzy bar.

[Peter Pan Diner](#) – family owned since 1979 with a unique menu inspired by the family's Greek heritage. Chef-prepared specialties are also offered every day and the majority of the desserts and fresh baked goods are made in-house daily. Peter Pan Diner never disappoints.



## Fort Lauderdale Gay Bars

Many have attributed the growth of Fort Lauderdale's gay community to the decline of Miami Beach's popularity for LGBT residents. As changes in Miami have occurred over the decades, many residents have moved north to the less pretentious and more affordable neighborhoods of Fort Lauderdale, particularly Wilton Manors. It's in this neighborhood where you'll find the majority of the popular nightlife venues.

**Matty's** – this is a popular video bar with a variety of special events and drink specials throughout the week. They occasionally host popular gay recording artists and DJ's.

**Lips** – looking for a drag show? This is the place to go watch the show, see lip-syncing queens perform and hassle the crowd of locals looking for a fun and interactive night out.

**Georgie's Alibi** – daily happy hour on food and drink including 2-for-1 specials with a variety of live performances and events.

**Infinity Lounge** – a mixed gay and straight crowd in a casual, lounge atmosphere with a wide range of tasty drinks and cocktails.

**The Pub** – a gay video bar and popular with all types. You'll find a gay and lesbian mixed crowd and a packed dance floor on Friday and Saturday nights.

## Fort Lauderdale Gay Clubs and Parties

The club scene in Fort Lauderdale is nothing like that of the upscale and perhaps pretentious vibe of Miami Beach. Fort Lauderdale is casual and so too are its dancing venues. The Manor is a must-visit place especially if you only choose one club to go. However, you can find dancing at a few other venues including Village Pub, Hunters and even Scandals – if country music is your thing.

**The Manor** – the largest and probably the most popular place to dance the night away on weekend nights. They have a huge main dance room plus a number of other small spaces, seating areas and terraces.

**Hunters** – a popular bar and club venue with karaoke, cabaret and country western dancing. They also host a popular Sunday tea dance.

**Scandals** – this is the go-to gay country western bar complete with cute cowboys, line dancing and cheap drinks.

### **Gay Beaches in Fort Lauderdale**

**Sebastian Street Beach** – this is the main and most popular gay beach of Fort Lauderdale. The beach is located off Sebastian street, near the Ritz Carlton. It's near many of the gay hotels and resorts so attracts a large crowd of LGBT visitors.

Northeast 18th Street Beach – another gay beach smaller than Sabastian Street Beach and more typically visited by locals.

**Haulover Nude Beach** – this beach is located between Fort Lauderdale and Miami and is one of Florida's most famous nude beaches. It's family friendly so you'll find a mix of people, LGBT and straight. Most go nude but it's not required.



Photo credit: Doug Castanedo via Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau

## Gay Events in Fort Lauderdale

Probably the most popular event of the year is the [annual Halloween celebration](#) that takes place in Wilton Manors. This outdoor event includes parades, concerts and lots of parties to round up a celebration that draws crowds including local residents, regional dwellers and even travelers coming from afar to partake in the celebration. [Pride Fort Lauderdale](#) is another popular event which typically takes place in the Spring.

## Day Trips from Fort Lauderdale

Miami – the unofficial Latin capital of the US. Miami Beach itself is one of a kind – still a top destination famous for its beaches, architecture and the energy that pulses into the night. Downtown Miami is recently up and coming and is also worth visiting, about a 30-minute drive south without traffic. Add an extra 15 minutes if you're going to Miami Beach. During peak travel times, it can easily take an hour or more. You can take a guided tour or even take the [Tri-rail](#) to avoid traffic.

[The Everglades](#) – Escape to the wilderness of Florida's Everglades. Join a small-group tour, which includes an airboat ride through Everglades National Park, a drive through Big Cypress National Preserve, a nature walk through a cypress forest and a scenic boat ride through the 10,000 islands of Everglades National Park in search of a variety of wildlife. [Book tour →](#)

[Key West](#) – though it's a bit far, you can actually do [Key West](#) as a day trip. Drive across the famous 7 Mile Bridge straddling the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean on your ride into the Keys, and then explore the island on your own before your return transfer. Travel from Fort Lauderdale to Key West with ease on this full-day tour. [Book tour →](#)