



# Florida Manatees

**November 8 – 11, 2008**

\$995 per person double occupancy

Single supplement \$300

Join the Saint Louis Zoo as we experience the magic of Florida's Manatees along the Crystal River! This trip includes the opportunity to swim with the manatees or interact with them from a small boat, learn about manatee conservation efforts and visit manatee rehab centers. Birding and wildlife viewing at natural areas and parks, nature excursions in and around Crystal River, and a visit to Lowery Park Zoo round out the trip.

You will be guests at the Plantation Golf Resort & Spa amid the unspoiled splendor and beauty of Florida's Nature Coast. The Plantation, set upon 232 acres along the Crystal River Inlets, offers a variety of activities for the whole family. Every winter, a large group of manatees makes a yearly pilgrimage up the warm water of Crystal River. This group of West Indian Manatees is a playful bunch, and you will be up close and personal with these "Gentle Giants" as you swim and observe this large group of 50 or more.



Besides two 3 hour swims with the manatees, you will spend an afternoon with an Audubon Naturalist exploring the trails of Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park, a showcase for Florida's birds and wildlife. While there, a special behind-the-scenes tour of the manatee rehab center has been arranged. Optional Activities include birding by kayak on Crystal River, Archeological Interpretive Walk, Nature Hike at Crystal River State Park or an Ocean beach trip. Last but not least, on our return to Tampa, we will visit the Tampa Lowery Park Zoo and their manatee rehabilitation center.

Trip escorted by Eric Miller, Senior Vice President for Zoological Operations

For more information and to register for the trip, call Altair Travel at (314) 968-9600.



## ITINERARY

### **Saturday, November 8**

Flight to Tampa, Florida and transfer to Crystal River via motor coach  
Afternoon on own at Plantation Inn Resort  
Welcome Reception and Dinner

### **Sunday, November 9**

Morning swim with the Manatees  
Afternoon birding & wildlife viewing at Homosassa State Park  
Tour of Manatee rehab center

### **Monday, November 10th**

Morning swim with the Manatees  
Afternoon: Optional Nature Activities

### **Tuesday, November 11**

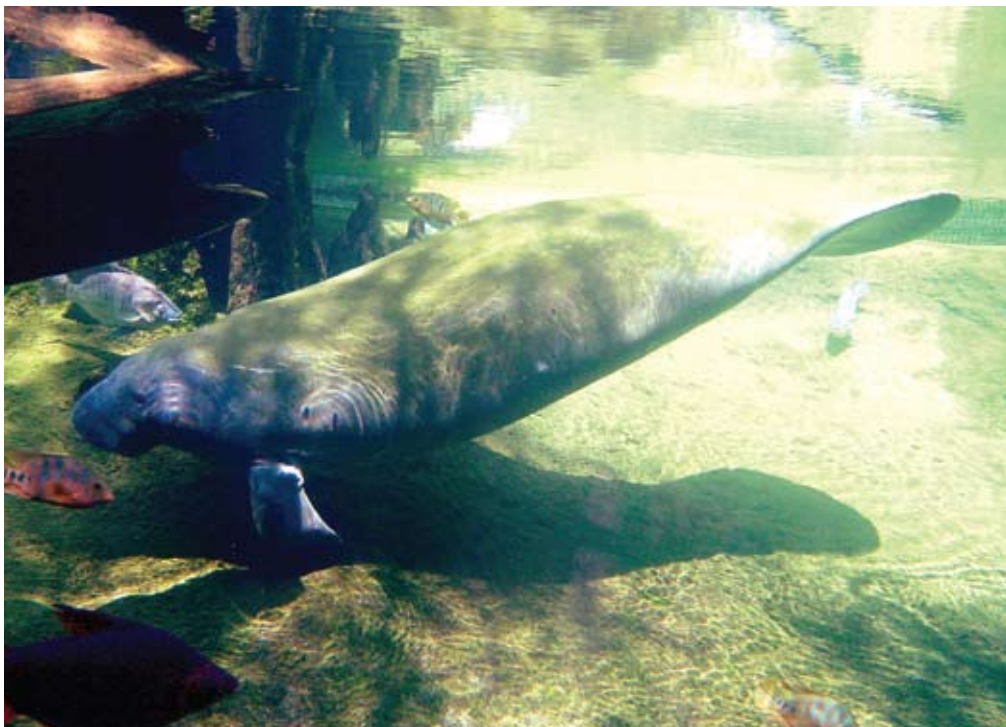
Tampa Lowery Park Zoo—  
Manatee Rehabilitation  
Evening return flight to St Louis

### November 8

Depart St. Louis for morning air flight to Tampa, Florida. A motor coach will drive the group from the airport to Crystal River (90 minute ride) arriving in the afternoon at the beautiful Plantation Inn Hotel on the Crystal River. You will have the afternoon free to explore the grounds and see the manatees in the river's inlets. That evening the group will have a welcome reception at the resort followed by dinner. Relax this evening as a full day of activities awaits you tomorrow. (D)

### November 9

After an early breakfast you head to the dive shop for your first intimate encounter with the manatees. Those who wish to swim will receive snorkel gear and wet suit. The group departs on a boat for a three-hour trip into King's Bay to experience these "gentle giants" as they feed and swim in the crystal clear waters that remain 72°F year round. You can enjoy the manatees from the boat or jump in and swim among the group. You will have a chance to visit King Spring and other areas that support abundant fish populations. After an exhilarating morning you return for lunch and then depart for nearby Homosassa State Park for an afternoon of birding and wildlife viewing. An Audubon Naturalist will accompany the group interpreting the area's ecology and leading a bird watching walk. A behind the scenes tour of the manatee rehab center has also been arranged. The group will arrive back in time for dinner. Relax that evening enjoying Florida's pleasant temperatures. (B, D)



### November 10

Another opportunity to swim with the manatees this morning! Or you can take in the wildlife from the boat out on King's Bay. The boat will also visit new areas along the Crystal River for you to explore and see water birds, reptiles, fish as well as aquatic mammals. The afternoon offers different optional activity choices including: Birding by Kayak on Crystal River, Interpretive Walk at Crystal River Archeological State Park (2hrs), and Nature Hike at Crystal River State Park and possibly an ocean beach trip. (B, D)

### November 11

After breakfast you pack up and depart for Tampa via motor coach. A special visit to the Lowery Park Zoo in Tampa has been arranged. Besides seeing the animal exhibits, you will have a chance to learn about conservation efforts to help the manatees and visit the Florida Manatee & Aquatic Center's Manatee Hospital and Rehabilitation Center. You will be dropped off at the airport for an early evening flight home. (B)

### Trip Price Includes:

- Three nights at the Plantation Inn Resort
- Three Breakfasts and Dinners
- Two 3 Hour Manatee Tours (Mask, fins, snorkel & wetsuit included)
- Motor coach transportation
- Luggage Handling In and Out
- All Taxes, Gratuities and Resort Fees Included at resort
- Trip Protection Insurance
- Admission to Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park and Lowery Park Zoo

### Trip Price Excludes:

- Airfare (available through Altair Travel or this can be booked on your own) (Please note that if air is booked on your own, you will need to coordinate your air schedule to include motor coach transfers to and from the airport. Otherwise, transfers will be an additional expense.)
- Lunches

### Physical Activity

#### EASY to MODERATE

This is a leisurely trip with participants choosing the level of activity they wish to undertake. Participants can either swim with manatees or interact with them from a boat. Walks are on level ground.