



Sunshine Paradise: A History of Florida Tourism (Florida History and Culture)

Tracy J. Revels

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How tourism shaped the Sunshine State

"An enlightening journey through Florida's diverse and evolving tourism history, illustrating the changing face of tourism over the years, and how Floridians have coped with these changes. An informative look at Florida's past efforts to woo tourists, and the mixed blessings that tourism has brought to the Sunshine State."--Brian Rucker, author of *Image and Reality*

"At last--a readable, concise history of Florida tourism from the earliest European discovery to the present. Revels's prose sizzles. Her ability to summarize and analyze more than 300 years of Florida tourism in just over 200 pages is truly stunning. It is a remarkable achievement. *Sunshine Paradise* both entertains and informs on every page, and it should be required reading for policy makers and everyone else who needs to know how current Florida came to be."--James M. Denham, professor of history and director, Lawton M. Chiles Jr., Center for Florida History, Florida Southern College

For nearly two hundred years, Floridians have eagerly exploited tourism as the key to economic prosperity. As a result, the state has constantly reshaped and remodeled itself as different types of tourist heavens, and many aspects of its history have become inseparable from the fantastic images created by the tourism industry. From spa retreats to nature preserves, from riverboat rides to roller coasters, and from railroads to theme parks, the state's dependence on tourism has greatly shaped its identity.

Sunshine Paradise is the first book to focus exclusively on how--and why--tourism came to define Florida. Offering a concise look at the subject from the 1820s to the present, Tracy Revels demonstrates tourism's relevance to all other major aspects of Florida history, including the Civil War, the land boom, and civil rights.

In this enjoyable and well-written history, Revels shows how Florida's tourism industry has remained adaptive and expansive, ready to sell the next version of paradise to northerners hungry for sunshine. She also explains why the state's business and political leaders must consider the history of tourism development as they plan for the state's future.

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