



Hyatt Regency Coconut Point, Bonita Springs, Florida

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At the **Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort and Spa** in Bonita Springs, Florida, presentation is key to a wonderful family beach vacation. From the smiling faces of the staff upon arrival, to the waterfall pool that welcomes guest to the well-manicured grounds, to the tropical fare served at the resort's four restaurants, everything is presented in an elegant, yet relaxed fashion. The instant I stepped out of the car, I immediately felt completely at ease. Having traveled from the cold, miserable weather of the New York area, the Naples Coast of Florida was absolute paradise, and my entire stay at the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point was nothing short of amazing.

The resort is centrally located between Fort Myers and Naples on the west coast of Florida. An extremely family-friendly environment, the resort truly offers something for everyone. From the Camp Coconut kids club to the Raptor Bay Golf Club and the Stillwater Spa, each and every traveler will find something that fits their preference.



At Stylish Hyatt Coconut Point, Casual Elegance in Dining

When you first enter the [Hyatt Regency Coconut Point](#), the allure of soft, neutral décor invites you to relax and to stay for awhile. The airy lobby is drenched in natural light brought in by tall windows that look out onto the tropical landscape. Dark wood window frames and furniture contrast with the subtle hues of the interior.

The spacious accommodations are blissfully comfortable, providing guests with every amenity -- such as wired internet access, flat-screen TV, DVD player, mini refrigerator, ceiling fans -- -- -- --..... they might need. Each of the 454 guestrooms has its own walk-out balcony to showcase the fresh, clean air and amazing views of southwest Florida. Guestrooms have a king or two double beds; families traveling with older kids and teens can opt to have an adjoining room or a suite that provides a bit more space.

The property's four restaurants are run under the culinary expertise of Executive Chef Andreas Singer. Tropically inspired dishes are artfully presented at each, although they all have something unique to offer.

Tanglewood is a AAA Four Diamond Award-Winner and offers American favorites like burgers, salads, sandwiches, steaks and pasta served indoors or out for a casual dining experience. On my visit, I tried the Roasted Chicken Tortilla Soup and the Pine Island Salad. The soup had a creamy tomato base with just the right amount of spicy-heat and was presented tableside with the hot liquid poured over the chicken, tortilla strips, pico de gallo and avocado. The salad was full of sweet and creamy textures; the crispy romaine was topped with tropical fruits, candied pecans and was balanced with creamy feta cheese.

For an amazing selection of seafood options, visit **Tarpon Bay** (and don't worry, they offer chicken and beef, too). Tarpon Bay is famous for its Ceviche bar, and boasts a selection of eight of these classic Mexican seafood dishes made with raw fish that is "cooked" in citrus juice and enhanced by various spices, fruits and vegetables to add dimension and texture; my favorite was the tuna with soy and cucumber. On my visit I also tried the Crispy Whole Snapper, a tender white fish fried whole with a light seasoning of breadcrumbs and spices. The Lobster Mac-n-Cheese was also phenomenal, and its rich, creamy texture makes it the perfect appetizer to share. To finish off the meal, try the Key Lime Tart, a traditional Florida dessert done with a chocolate cookie crust for a delightful twist.

At **Corkscrew**, resort visitors can dine poolside at this fun, tropical café. The menu is simple, offering burgers, wraps and salads and served with fruity frozen drinks. I tried the Tropical Steak Wrap, which was given a nice flavor from the grilled pineapple and roasted tomatoes. Be sure to try the plantain chips, a sweet and salty treat that complements all of the menu items nicely. If the kids are otherwise engaged, head to **Mangroves**, the perfect setting to begin or end the night. A cozy lobby lounge, Mangroves serves up delicious drink specials and light bites. Ask your server for house specialties and suggestions; the bartenders usually make creative cocktails that are inspired by local flavors.

Hyatt Coconut Point Introduces Guests to the Local Environment

The back entrance of the hotel opens onto a tropical landscape and a grand waterfall pool. Walking along the fountain-lined walkway, visitors can find a secluded nook to sit and relax among the shady palm trees and fragrant flowers. At the end of the fountain line is the calming rush of the waterfall that triumphantly flows at the center of the property. To the left of the waterfall is Estero Bay, a natural oasis for southern Florida wildlife. There is a wooden boardwalk path that stretches up the property to a dock where guests can take a shuttle to a private island or be adventurous on a kayak tour.

The Hyatt Regency Coconut Point is not located directly on a beach, so they instead have a private island where guests can sunbathe, swim or search for seashells. The island, called **Big Hickory Island Beach**, is just a 15-minute boat ride away, with a shuttle service departing the resort every hour. Guests can borrow towels from the recreational desk, and since there is no retail area on the island, guests are encouraged to bring their own snacks and drinks. At the **Kofe Nut**, a small coffee shop located off the lobby, resort guests can borrow a rolling cooler to bring to Big Hickory Island.

Kayak tours are also offered from this dock. On my stay, I took a two-hour guided tour that followed the mangroves that grow along the Estero Bay's coast. My tour guide, Jordan, was knowledgeable and encouraging, this having been my first time in a kayak. He showed the group the basics before we were

launched into the water, and much to my content told us that we would find no alligators or sharks in these waters because the bay is an estuary (water with both fresh and sea water sources). The tour was both adventurous and educational, as we learned about the history of the area and about its wildlife inhabitants. My group was lucky enough to see two dolphins just a few yards away from our kayaks, although I hear that this is not a rare occurrence. Based on experience, be sure to wear lots of sunscreen and leave your afternoon free so that you can relax after hours of paddling. The resort offers kayak tours for adults on Saturday mornings, and now teens ages 13-16 can have their own adventure on Saturday afternoons. Kayak tours can be organized at the Recreation Desk, located poolside near the Corkscrew restaurant.

At Hyatt Coconut Point, On-site Recreation is Designed for All Ages

The Recreation Desk will help guests coordinate other organized activities as well. From complimentary bicycle rentals for touring the grounds and surrounding area to a free-standing 24-foot climbing wall, there are plenty of activities to keep everyone busy. The recreation desk also organizes poolside activities for the younger set, as well as **Camp Coconut**, the resort's kids-only zone. Camp Coconut is available for children ages 3 to 12 (must be potty trained) for either a full day or a half day session. Planned activities include trips to Hickory Island, relay races, arts and crafts, and aquatic adventures. The camp counselors also promise to include Floridian culture, teaching kids about the area in fun and meaningful ways. If you happen to be there on a rainy day, there are plenty of indoor activities to do as well, including big screen movies and fun projects.

When the kids are at Camp Coconut, mom and dad can enjoy some relaxation time. The **Stillwater Spa** offers a variety of treatments including manicures and pedicures, facials, massages and personal yoga sessions, among others. I recommend the Chocolate Mani/Pedi, a relaxing treatment to polish your hands and feet that features delicious chocolate to eat, as well as sweet and soothing scrubs and creams.

For the golfers, there is the **Raptor Bay Golf Club**. The 27-hole golf course is situated on 200 acres of natural vegetation and was carefully designed to preserve the original habitat. Designed by legendary golfer Raymond Floyd, the course is meant to encourage accuracy and enjoyment. Guests can access the golf course from a trolley that travels between the resort and course. At the Raptor Bay, guests can enjoy dining at Braxton's Restaurant and Bar.

The whole family will also enjoy the heated **Adventure Pool**. The highlight of this winding blue sanctuary is the 144-foot waterslide, for those who have reached 42 inches and taller. An interesting challenge for those who love one: travel down the water slide 100 times for a commemorative medal. For the smaller set, the Ciquala Pool Slide is just as much fun. Fun-shaped tubes and noodles can be borrowed from the Recreation Desk along with towels. The recreation staff also organizes fun events around the pool, so be sure to ask at the desk or look out for staff members encouraging participation.

At the end of a long day, the whole family can gather around the resort's glowing fire pit. Lit virtually every night, the round fire pit offers 360 degrees of comfortable seating. For a fun treat, S'mores kits can be purchased at the Kofe Nut shop, and enjoy a relaxing and sweet evening with the whole family.

Trip Planning Details for Bonita Springs, Florida

For Florida residents, Hyatt Regency Coconut Point is a resort getaway approximately a 2-hour drive from Tampa, a 3-hour drive from Orlando and a 2-hour drive from Miami. The resort offers complimentary self-parking and also offers valet parking for an additional fee.

For guests coming by plane, **Southwest Florida International Airport** has non-stop flights from 43 domestic locations and 5 international locations. The resort is about a 25-minute drive from the airport. **Limousine Plus** (239/948-8002) is a local service whose friendly staff will drive you effortlessly between the airport and resort. Rental car services are also available at the airport.

The Hyatt Regency Coconut Point is promoting a year-long program called "Sunshine on Sale 2011." If you book three nights at the resort, the fourth night is free. See the [website](#) for additional details and restrictions.

While the resort has a lot to offer, families may feel the need to explore beyond the resort property. The concierge is friendly and helpful, and they are readily available to help you discover the Bonita Springs area. There is also a complimentary shuttle that will take guests to the Coconut Point Mall. Ask the concierge for details and for the shuttle schedule, as it may differ depending on the day.