

CFCA Cruise to Key West

Departing Friday, November 1st, 2013

Starting Point:

CFCA will depart from the Cracker Barrel Restaurant just South of SR417 on Orange Blossom Trail.

Cracker Barrel Restaurant
13300 S. Orange Blossom Trail
SR 417 & US 17/92/441
Orlando, FL 32837-6636
www.crackerbarrel.com

Meet for breakfast at 6 A.M. with a driver's meeting at 7 A.M. and immediate departure after everyone has signed the club liability waiver.

The Route: 379 mi, 6 hrs, 41 minutes according to Google... your mileage & speed may vary. :-)

Departing from the Cracker Barrel, we will turn right (South) onto Orange Blossom Trail. Go about 3 miles then turn left (East) onto Osceola Parkway. Once on the Parkway, get into the right lane as we will take the onramp on the right to the Florida Turnpike (South) where we will begin our journey to the Keys.

F.T. Mile Marker 229	Canoe Creek Service Plaza (optional stop)
F.T. Mile Marker 184	Fort Drum Service Plaza (scheduled stop)
F.T. Mile Marker 144	Fort Pierce/Port St. Lucie Service Plaza (optional stop)
F.T. Mile Marker 94	West Palm Beach Service Plaza (scheduled stop)
F.T. Mile Marker 71	Exit to Sawgrass Expressway (Route 869)
	Take Sawgrass Expressway to I-75 South
I-75, Exit 5	Head towards KEY WEST
F.T. Mile Marker 39	Rejoin Florida Turnpike South
F.T. Mile Marker 19	Snapper Creek Service Plaza (optional stop)
F.T. Mile Marker 2	Florida City (scheduled stop at Shell Station on right)

Take U.S. 1 towards Key West (about 2-1/2 hours)

U.S. 1 Mile Marker 90	Craig's Restaurant (on right), Tavernier Key We <i>may</i> stop here for lunch or continue on to Key West.
U.S. 1 Mile Marker 0	Sheraton Suites Key West, 2001 South Roosevelt Blvd AT LAST! WE MADE IT!

Our first scheduled rest stop will be at the at the Fort Drum Service Plaza rest at Mile Marker 184 for early-morning coffee drainage about an hour from Orlando. Our next scheduled stop will be at the West Palm Beach Service Plaza at Mile Marker 94 about 2-1/2 hours from Orlando. If you NEED to stop before one of our scheduled breaks, by all means, do so! We will bypass most of the Miami traffic by taking the Sawgrass Expressway (Route 869) at Mile Marker 71 and continue on to I-75 South.

We'll follow I-75 South to exit 5 (old 3B exit to Key West) where we will once again get back onto the Florida Turnpike southbound. Only if needed, we can stop at exit 9 (Coral Gables Drive) for a rest stop otherwise we will continue on to Florida City where the Turnpike ends and we'll have our next scheduled potty/fuel stop at the big Shell station on the right hand side of the road. Recommend everyone fill up their tanks here. It can get pretty crowded so if there is no room, visit one of the other gas stations on either side the highway.

From that point on it's a 2 lane road nearly all the way to Key West (about 2-1/2 hours from Florida City). The narrow roads in the keys can be quite dangerous (darn tourists!) so be careful and watch your speed.

An optional lunch stop is Craig's Restaurant in Tavernier Key, on your right at Mile Marker 90.5. Parking is in the back. If you're really hungry, stop here for lunch (try their Famous Fish Sandwich) or just keep on trucking to the Sheraton Suites Key West, at 2001 South Roosevelt Blvd in Key West, arriving by early afternoon.

FRS radios - channel 7, sub-channel 0. Please keep this channel clear for caravan info and emergencies.

Turnpike Tolls. You'll need your E-Pass Transponder or approximately \$11 in tolls.

Caravan Etiquette. Safety is our prime concern. Please turn on your parking lights or daytime running lights. When traveling in a caravan with other Corvettes, keep it reasonably tight but maintain enough distance between cars to be safe. Be alert and WATCH the car in front of you. When the car in front of you slows or applies their turn signal, please do likewise for the benefit of those behind you. Caravans have the natural tendency to "rubber band" but we'll try to slow down somewhat after each toll booth or other bottleneck to allow others to catch up. Observe the speed limit and obey all traffic laws (rules dictate I gotta say that).

Team up with a Caravan Buddy! Our group is too large and the distance too far to try to keep everyone together for the entire trip. We'll do our best but won't hold up the entire group waiting for stragglers. So team up with a caravan buddy and exchange cell phone numbers in case of emergency and we'll cya in the Keys!

Key West. After checking in at our hotel, you'll want to get ready for CFCA's Champagne Sunset Cruise on Friday evening. Our "Floridays" sailing ship (call 305-744-8335 to book) departs from the Hyatt Hotel Marina, 601 Front St, at 5:30 pm and returns around 7:30 pm. You must be at the marina by 5:15 to check in so plan accordingly. Key West Taxi may be reached at 305-296-6666. The hotel also offers a shuttle but you must sign up for it at the front desk. As this is also Parrot Head Weekend, Jimmy Buffet will likely be in town and may stop by Margaritaville on Duvall Street. Ya never know! You will want to visit some of Key West's great night spots like Sloppy Joe's, Hog's Breath Saloon, Fat Tuesday's, Captain Tony's, the Bull, and many others. Just try to keep your composure! ☺ We have organized a CFCA dinner on Saturday night at the Conch Republic, one of our favorite Key West eateries, and also an optional day trip to the Dry Tortugas on Monday (call 800-634-0939 to book). There is so much else to do in Key West! You may want to try the Conch Tram Tour, visit the Mel Fisher Maritime Museum, Harry S Truman Little White House, Ernest Hemingway Home, Southernmost Point in the US, Shipwreck Museum, Ripley's Believe It Or Not, Key West Aquarium, do some serious shopping, rent a bicycle or moped, watch for the "green flash" at sunset from Mallory Square, catch the Powerboat Parade down Duval Street on Sunday at 4:00 pm, or hangout at Smather's Beach (literally across the street from our hotel). Otherwise just take it easy and relax... island style!

Return trip to Orlando. You are on your own for the return trip to Orlando as so many plan to leave on different days and times. Just reverse the driving directions northward or use your GPS and you'll be fine.

Have Fun but be Safe! And remember... Keep the SHINY side UP! ☺

Emergency Contact Cell #'s:

Patti Hutchinson: 407-256-1335
Arlene Pavlic: 407-497-7922

John Hutchinson: 407-403-4249
Duane Pavlic: 407-733-8342