

Tips for Travelers Flying into Tampa International Airport

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Welcome to the Tampa Bay area! With three great cities – St. Petersburg, Tampa and Clearwater – plus 20+ miles of beautiful beaches of the Gulf of Mexico from Clearwater Beach to Pass-A-Grille and Ft. DeSoto Park, I am glad you chose our area of our great state of Florida to vacation, to do business or to decide on living in our area. Whatever your desires are, you will find plenty to see and do in the Tampa Bay metropolitan area.

Most visitors usually arrive by way of airplane, passing through the World's Finest Airport, [Tampa International Airport](#). In this discussion I will show you how to navigate through the World's Finest Airport in order to get to where you want to go in the Tampa Bay area.

Arrival at Tampa International Airport

More than likely you will see the outline of our three principal bridges crossing Tampa Bay – Courtney Campbell Causeway, Howard Frankland Bridge and Gandy Bridge – as your plane descends for touchdown and pulls into the gate at Tampa International Airport. Once your plane pulls up to the gate you will exit through a jetway – a small bridge between the plane and the gate - to go into the airside building.

Once inside the airside building follow the signs to board the tram – which is called the airside shuttle – to go to the main terminal building called the Landside terminal building. Depending on your airline you will follow a color code, Red or Blue, to the escalator which will lead you to the first floor and the baggage claim area for your airline.

For our International Visitors

Should you arrive on an international flight such as British Airways from London's Gatwick Airport or any other international flight, you will step into Airside F and be directed to United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in order to clear immigration and customs. You will retrieve your baggage just before you clear customs, as CBP officials have the right under United States federal law to inspect your baggage. After you clear immigration and customs you will want to have your baggage transported from the immigration and customs area at Airside F to the baggage claim area on the first floor of the landside terminal building; there are no carts available in any of the airsides and you are not permitted to take a cart onto the airside shuttles.

If you are coming from an international location where you have gone through United States CBP preclearance (such as Canada and a few other places), you will

not have to clear customs and immigration when you land. You will simply exit the airplane, board the airside shuttle and proceed to the baggage claim area on the first floor of the landside terminal building to claim your baggage like you would a domestic USA flight.

Proceed on the escalator to the 1st Floor and the baggage claim area. Once you retrieve your baggage from the baggage claim area where you go next depends on which ground transportation option you select or if someone is picking you up.

Rental Cars

Most rental car companies maintain their rental counters in the baggage claim area just after you pick up your baggage. Simply go to the rental car company of your choice and arrange to pick up your rental car. The rental car company will direct you to pick up your car in the rental car area of the airport.

Alamo and National Rent a Car Renters: If you are renting from Alamo or National it will be necessary to take their shuttle bus to their facility as their facility is located on airport property but not in the terminal. You will catch the Alamo/National shuttle bus over at the ground transportation waiting area and ride the shuttle bus to the Alamo/National facility to rent your car.

Airport Shuttle Service

The primary provider of airport shuttle service is SuperShuttle Tampa Bay, as well as a few other companies providing service to outlying areas such as Sarasota or Spring Hill. Simply proceed to the ground transportation waiting area and to the booth for your airport shuttle company.

Taxicab Service

The primary provider of taxicab service is either Yellow Cab of Tampa or United Cab. Simply proceed outside to the arrival drive and press one of the buttons marked to call a cab. The next available driver will pick you up and take you where you need to go. Fares depend on your destination; for example a taxi ride from Tampa International Airport to downtown St. Petersburg would probably run you about \$25 to \$30. *There is a minimum fare when you take a taxicab from Tampa International Airport; keep this in mind.*

Charter Buses

If you are traveling as a group and your group will be riding on a charter bus, your bus will be waiting for you in the ground transportation waiting area. Simply proceed to the ground transportation waiting area and wait for instructions from your charter bus company. This also applies for those taking a charter bus to the Port of Tampa to embark on a cruise.

Someone is meeting you

Due to enhanced airport security instituted after the September 11th tragedy, only ticketed passengers are allowed at the airside. However, if you have a specific need to meet your party at the gate (such as children traveling alone), you will have to get a gate pass which is issued by the airline involved.

Remember to bring government issued photo ID¹ in order to receive a gate pass. Otherwise, you may meet your party either at the Landside terminal building (3rd Level) or the Baggage Claim area (1st Level).

Another option is the newly opened cell phone lot located adjacent to the economy parking garage. To get there take the exit for the Post Office and follow the signs to the cell phone lot. Once at the cell phone lot there is an electronic message board showing what flights have arrived; simply monitor the board for your party's incoming flight. Once the message board states that the flight has arrived, TIA authorities recommend a wait of 20 minutes to allow time for transit through the terminal and baggage retrieval.

Waiting for your party in the arrival drive is not permitted. The airport police will inform you to move your vehicle if you are not actively loading in the arrival drive. Same thing goes for the departure drive as well. So, you may want to avail yourself of the cell phone lot or the short-term/long-term parking garage; after all, the first hour is free!

Exiting Tampa International Airport and getting to your destination

OK, now that you have your luggage together and you got your rental car with you, you are ready to navigate the highway network of the metropolitan Tampa Bay area to get where you need to go! Whether it's your first time here in the Tampa Bay area or you are a repeat visitor, navigating our highway network can be a challenge especially for the uninitiated. But you will make it to where you need to go!

Obviously the first thing you will do is to exit the airport. While you are on Tampa International Airport territory there are signs marked leading you to the airport exit.

Due to ongoing construction as you exit Tampa International Airport, traffic configurations may change as construction progresses. The best advice is to pay attention to all construction signage as you exit from the airport. Hopefully construction should be wrapped up sometime in 2010.

By the way, for our British visitors coming into the Tampa Bay area on British Airways please be aware that Florida as well as the rest of the United States drives on the right side of the road just like continental Europe. Rental cars will have the steering wheel on the left front side of the vehicle, hence the name "left hand drive". This will take some getting used to but you will make it! The terms Motorway and Interstate Highway mean the same thing.

¹ Government issued photo ID includes: Passport, US Passport Card, drivers license or state issued ID.



If you are headed to Clearwater via FL 60 or north via the Veterans Expressway (FL Toll 589): Be sure to use the right lane marked for FL 60 west and FL Toll 589 north.

If you are headed to St. Petersburg: Use the left lane and take the flyover that goes to your left. This will place you directly onto Interstate 275 southbound to St. Petersburg. (NOTE: There is no exit between the entrance of the left flyover and Exit 32, FL 687/4 St N in St. Petersburg, so be careful!).

If you are headed to Tampa: Use the center or right lane and take the flyover that goes to the right. This will place you onto FL 60 east which will take you to Interstate 275 northbound to Tampa. Also use the flyover to the right to reach Cypress Street as well as FL 616 east, Spruce Street.²

The Metropolitan Tampa Bay Area Highway Network

Three principal Interstate highways and a number of other major highways make up the basic Tampa Bay highway network:

Interstate 275: This is the major Interstate highway that runs through the metropolitan areas of Tampa and St. Petersburg. The Howard Frankland Bridge is a bridge connecting Tampa with St. Petersburg crossing Tampa Bay while the Sunshine Skyway Bridge is a scenic cable-stayed bridge offering panoramic views of Tampa Bay as well as connecting St. Petersburg and points south such as Bradenton and Sarasota. In St. Petersburg two spurs serve the downtown St. Petersburg area, Interstate 375 and Interstate 175.

² Use Spruce Street to reach International Plaza (an upscale shopping mall adjacent to Tampa International Airport) or Raymond James Stadium.



Interstate 275 shield commonly seen in the Tampa Bay area

Interstate 75: Part of the major Interstate highway in Florida running from the Georgia state line near the town of Jennings to its national terminus in Miami, Interstate 75 in the Tampa Bay area runs east of the Tampa metropolitan area proper and serves the communities of Sun City Center/Ruskin, Riverview, Brandon, Temple Terrace as well as New Tampa.

Interstate 4: Another Florida based Interstate highway running from its western terminus at Interstate 275 in Tampa to its eastern terminus at Interstate 95 in Daytona Beach, Interstate 4 runs basically across the state until it reaches Orlando and then it turns in a northeastward direction to its eastern Daytona Beach terminus. Interstate 4 is the route most travelers take to access the Orlando area attractions such as Disney World, Sea World and Universal Studios Florida from the Tampa Bay area.

US 19: Part of a major highway running the gulf coast of the state, US 19 serves the western half of the Tampa Bay area such as New Port Richey, Port Richey, Tarpon Springs, Clearwater, Largo, Pinellas Park as well as St. Petersburg. The section of US 19 from 126 Av N in Pinellas Park to Whitney Road in Largo is freeway standard and more sections of US 19 are either freeway standard or in the process of being upgraded to freeway standard. A spur of US 19, Alternate US 19, serves the downtowns proper of Clearwater and Largo as well as Seminole.

US 41: Part of a major highway that basically parallels Interstate 75 throughout Florida, US 41 serves communities such as Land O Lakes (which is north of Tampa) as well as the communities on the eastern shore of Tampa Bay such as Apollo Beach and Ruskin. In Tampa a spur of US 41 serves the downtown Tampa area as Business US 41. South of Tampa US 41 becomes part of a scenic trail called the Tamiami Trail which runs from Tampa to Naples and across the Everglades to Miami.

US 301: Part of a major highway running from the Georgia state line near Jacksonville to its southern national terminus in Sarasota, US 301 is basically a two-lane highway with some four-lane sections and travels through the communities of Dade City, Zephyrhills, Riverview, Parrish and south to Bradenton and Sarasota.

US 92: Paralleling Interstate 4 from its western terminus at 4 St N and 5 Av N in downtown St. Petersburg to Daytona Beach, US 92 is basically a two-lane highway with the obvious exception of the metropolitan areas US 92 runs through. The Gandy Bridge carries US 92 over Tampa Bay connecting St. Petersburg with Tampa.

Lee Roy Selmon Crosstown Expressway (FL Toll 618): Running the southern portion of Tampa and into downtown Tampa and eastward to Interstate 75 and Brandon, the Lee Roy Selmon Crosstown Expressway – named after the former Tampa Bay Buccaneers player – provides travelers with access from the Brandon area to the Ybor City Historic District and downtown Tampa and vice versa, as well as a connection to St. Petersburg via the Gandy Bridge (US 92/Gandy Blvd) as the highway's southern terminus is at Gandy Boulevard. A reversible high level bridge open during the morning and afternoon rush hours provides commuters with quick and easy access between Brandon and downtown Tampa.

Veterans Expressway/Suncoast Parkway (FL Toll 589): Opened in 1994 and 2000 respectively, this 56-mile toll highway connects Interstate 275 and Tampa International Airport with destinations on the Nature Coast such as Spring Hill and Brooksville in Hernando County and Crystal River in Citrus County via a connection with US 98.

FL State Road 60: A cross state highway from Clearwater Beach to Vero Beach on the Florida East Coast, FL 60 provides travelers with access to the heart of Central Florida including communities such as Bartow and Lake Wales. FL 60 is known by several different names in the Tampa Bay area alone: Gulf To Bay Blvd. in Clearwater, Kennedy Blvd. and Adamo Drive in Tampa, and Brandon Blvd. in Brandon. The Courtney Campbell Causeway carries FL 60 over Tampa Bay connecting Tampa with Clearwater.

Speaking of Florida state roads, all Florida state roads are marked with a distinctive shield outlining the state of Florida. This is important to remember especially if you are flying in from out of state.



Example of a Florida state route shield

How do I get to...

St. Petersburg and the beaches of southern Pinellas County (St. Pete Beach, Treasure Island, Madeira Beach, the Redington Beaches and Indian Rocks Beach): Follow the airport exit to Interstate 275 south for St. Petersburg. Once on

Interstate 275 south cross the Howard Frankland Bridge; where you will want to exit depends on your destination:

<i>If your destination is:</i>	<i>You may want to use this exit:</i>
Downtown St. Petersburg (The Pier or BayWalk)	23A – Interstate 375 east. Proceed to end of highway and follow signs.
Downtown St. Petersburg (Tropicana Field or Mahaffey Theater)	22 – Interstate 175 east. Exit at 8 St S for Tropicana Field or proceed to end of highway for Mahaffey Theater.
Downtown St. Petersburg medical facilities (Bayfront Medical Center and All Children's Hospital)	22 – Interstate 175 east to 6 St S. Exit at 6 St S and turn right. Proceed one block and hospitals are on right.
University of South Florida St. Petersburg Campus	22 – Interstate 175 east to end of highway. Turn right at 2 St S and go south one block to campus.
Indian Rocks Beach	31 – Ulmerton Road/FL 688 west
Indian Shores	28 – Gandy Blvd/FL 694 west through Pinellas Park and Seminole.
Lealman or Kenneth City	26 – 54 Av N west. Lealman is one mile ahead while Kenneth City is three miles away from Interstate 275.
Madeira Beach, the Redington Beaches or the VA Medical Center at Bay Pines	25 – 38 Av N west. Proceed to Tyrone Blvd. (Alternate US 19) and turn right. Follow signs.
Sunken Gardens	24 – 22 Av N east to 4 St N, then right on 4 St N and Sunken Gardens will be on left side of 4 St N
Treasure Island	23B – 5 Av N – but proceed straight ahead to Central Avenue and then go west on Central Avenue
South Pasadena and St Pete Beach	23B – 5 Av N – but proceed straight ahead to Central Avenue and then go west on Central Avenue to Pasadena Blvd. Left at Pasadena Blvd.
St. Pete Beach and Pass-A-Grille	17 – FL 682 west via Pinellas Bayway (50 cent toll for Bayway) to Gulf Blvd. Left at Gulf Blvd. for Pass-A-Grille.
Tierra Verde and Ft. DeSoto Park	17 – FL 682 west via Pinellas Bayway (50 cent toll for Bayway). Left at FL 679 and proceed south across first bridge for Tierra Verde and second bridge for Ft. DeSoto Park (35 cent toll is collected on the second bridge)
Pinellas Park	28 – Gandy Blvd/FL 694 west. You will come into Pinellas Park as you cross the US 19 overpass. Name changes from Gandy to Park Blvd. at US 19.
Seminole	28 – Gandy Blvd/FL 694 west. Proceed through Pinellas Park for about three miles. Name changes from Gandy to Park Blvd. at US 19. You are in Seminole when you arrive at Alternate US 19 intersection.
Largo	31 – Ulmerton Road/FL 688 west to Roosevelt Blvd./FL 686 west. Bear right onto FL 686. Name changes from Roosevelt Blvd. to East Bay Drive at US 19 interchange.

Clearwater, Clearwater Beach, Belleair Beaches: Follow FL 60 west which will take you across the Courtney Campbell Causeway. The Courtney Campbell Causeway is a scenic parkway offering a great view of Tampa Bay on either side as you make your way to Clearwater. Once you see the overpass for the Bayside Bridge you are in Clearwater and FL 60 is also known as Gulf To Bay Blvd. The second overpass will be for US 19 as you head west on FL 60.

For Clearwater Beach, Sand Key and the Belleair Beaches continue west on FL 60 and follow the signs to the beaches. You will cross the newly opened Memorial Causeway Bridge on your way which is a majestic high bridge offering a spectacular view of the beaches as you head west. The end of FL 60 will be a roundabout and it is strongly recommended that you be in the proper lane before you approach the roundabout. For Sand Key and the Belleair Beaches you will go south on Gulf Blvd. and Sand Key will be signposted before you approach the roundabout.

Tampa:

Downtown Tampa including the Tampa Convention Center and the St. Petersburg Times Forum: Use Interstate 275 north to Exit 44, which is the Ashley, Tampa and Scott Street complex.

Ybor City: Use Interstate 275 north to Exit 45B, which is Interstate 4. Continue eastbound on Interstate 4 to Exit 1, which is 21st Street and 22nd Street. You want to turn right onto 21st Street as you exit Interstate 4. Proceed south to 7th Avenue, which is Ybor City's main street. Parking is available in nearby parking garages which you can access by following the signs. Ybor City can get quite congested on Saturday nights as well as special events, so plan ahead.

Brandon: Use Interstate 275 north to Exit 45B, Interstate 4. Continue eastbound on Interstate 4 to Exit 9, which is Interstate 75. Go southbound on Interstate 75 to Exit 257, which is FL 60. Turn left onto FL 60 and Brandon is straight ahead with the Brandon Town Center (a regional shopping mall) on your right as you go east on FL 60.

University of South Florida's Main Campus: Use Interstate 275 north to Exit 51, which is FL 582/Fowler Avenue. Go east on Fowler Avenue for about 3 miles and the campus will be on your left.

Busch Gardens: Use Interstate 275 north to Exit 50, FL 580/Busch Boulevard. Go east on Busch Boulevard for about 2.5 miles and Busch Gardens will be on your left. Follow signs for parking.

New Tampa community: Recommended route is to use Interstate 275 north to Exit 45B, Interstate 4 east. Continue on Interstate 4 east to Exit 9, which is Interstate 75. North on Interstate 75 to Exit 270, which is Bruce B. Downs Boulevard and the main street for the New Tampa community (you will not see New Tampa on any signs on the interstates, so be prepared!).

Or, continue north on Interstate 275 to Exit 53, which is Bearss Avenue. Eastbound on Bearss Avenue until you get to the end of the road, which will be Bruce B. Downs Boulevard. Turn left onto Bruce B. Downs and it will take you to New Tampa as well.

Citrus Park Town Center Mall: Take the Veterans Expressway (FL Toll 589) north to Exit 9, which is Gunn Highway. Left on Gunn Highway and the mall will be on your right.

International Plaza: Take FL 616 east which is also known as Spruce Street. Go east on Spruce Street to Westshore Boulevard and take a left. You cannot miss it.

The Communities of the North Suncoast:

This includes the communities of the northern Tampa Bay area such as Tarpon Springs, New Port Richey, Port Richey, Spring Hill, Brooksville and Crystal River. You will want to use the Veterans Expressway/Suncoast Parkway (FL Toll 589) to assist you in reaching these destinations. Due to the great distances involved allow yourself plenty of time to reach these communities.

Tarpon Springs: Use the Veterans Expressway to Hillsborough Avenue (be sure to stay to the right to avoid paying a toll). West on Hillsborough Avenue to US 19 (the road name changes to Tampa Road in Oldsmar at the Pinellas County line), then north on US 19 to Tarpon Avenue. Left on Tarpon Avenue to all Tarpon Springs attractions including the Sponge Docks.

New Port Richey: North on the Veterans Expressway to Exit 19, FL 54 and west on FL 54 to US 19. Proceed north on US 19 to New Port Richey.

Port Richey: North on the Veterans Expressway to Exit 27, FL 52 and west on FL 52 to US 19. Proceed south on US 19 to Port Richey. Or you may follow the directions to New Port Richey as mentioned above as the two cities are next door to each other on US 19.

Spring Hill: North on the Veterans Expressway to Exit 41, Spring Hill Blvd. Left on Spring Hill Blvd. and proceed west.

Brooksville: North on the Veterans Expressway to Exit 46, FL 50. Go east on FL 50 to Brooksville. Or, you may use Interstate 275 north through Tampa to Interstate 75 north and follow Interstate 75 north to Exit 301, FL 50 and US 98 and proceed west on FL 50 to Brooksville.

Crystal River: North on the Veterans Expressway to its terminus at US 98. North on US 98 to US 19 (the two highways merge with each other) and continue north to Crystal River. You'll pass through Homosassa Springs on your way.

Again, allow plenty of time to travel to the above North Suncoast destinations due to distance and traffic conditions you may encounter.

Bradenton and Sarasota:

You have two choices of routes from Tampa International Airport:

Via Interstate 275 through St. Petersburg: South on Interstate 275 through St. Petersburg and you will cross both the Howard Frankland Bridge and the Sunshine Skyway Bridge. There is a \$1.00 toll charged for the Sunshine Skyway Bridge. After the Sunshine Skyway Bridge continue south on Interstate 275 to its terminus with Interstate 75 and continue south on Interstate 75.

Via Interstates 275, 4 and 75 through Tampa: North on Interstate 275 until you reach Exit 45B, which is Interstate 4. East on Interstate 4 until you reach Exit 9, which is Interstate 75. Follow Interstate 75 south from there.

Whatever route you take, follow the signage to the exit of your choice. The route through St. Petersburg on Interstate 275 south is shorter; however, the alternate route through Tampa is included as described above especially if in the event the Sunshine Skyway Bridge is closed.

Outlying Florida Attractions:

Disney World including The Magic Kingdom, EPCOT and Disney Studios: North on Interstate 275 to Exit 45B, which is Interstate 4. The exit for Disney World is 62 miles from Interstate 275 and you will want to exit at Exit 62.

Sea World: North on Interstate 275 to Exit 45B, which is Interstate 4. You will be headed towards Orlando and you will want to exit at Exit 71.

Universal Studios: North on Interstate 275 to Exit 45B, which is Interstate 4. You will be headed towards Orlando and you will want to exit at Exits 75A or 75B. This exit is known as FL 435 or Kirkman Road. Follow the electronic signage as to where to exit as you approach Universal Studios.

Navigating the Tampa Bay area highway network

With a little forethought and preplanning, navigating the Tampa Bay area highway network can be easy for you. However, here are a few pointers you should keep in mind:

Plan your route with a map before you set out. That way, you know exactly where you are coming from and where you are going to. Remember, you have an additional resource by using Interstate275Florida.com as your guide to get you where you want to go in the Tampa Bay area; you can see the exits you will encounter before you set out especially if your journey involves Interstate 275 or the other interstate highways in the Tampa Bay area. If you rented a car your rental car company should give you a copy of a map of the Tampa Bay area or you can purchase one from a retailer.

The peak traffic hours are usually between 6 to 9 AM and 4 to 7 PM Monday through Friday. On the weekends you may encounter periods of peak traffic especially in the vicinity of major sports venues such as Raymond James Stadium, the St. Petersburg Times Forum and Tropicana Field. *This is something you may want to keep in mind if you have to be somewhere at a specific time, such as returning your rental car to catch your outgoing flight out of Tampa International Airport.*

If you are going from St. Petersburg to Tampa in the weekday afternoon, you may encounter heavy traffic on Interstate 275 north as you exit the Howard Frankland Bridge. *You may want to keep this in mind if your flight from Tampa International Airport departs in the weekday afternoon. Additionally, if your destination is not in the immediate vicinity of the Howard Frankland Bridge the Gandy Bridge (US 92) is a great alternative; if you need to reach Interstate 75 or the Brandon area you can use*

the Lee Roy Selmon Crosstown Expressway to get there (yes, the Crosstown is a toll road but it's worth it to beat the crowd).

While we are on the subject of the Lee Roy Selmon Crosstown Expressway if you drive this route from downtown Tampa to Interstate 75 you will see the elevated express lanes. This is a three lane reversible direction road in which the direction goes from Brandon to downtown Tampa in the morning hours and the direction changes going from downtown Tampa to Brandon during the evening hours. However, if you are visiting our area you will not be able to use the elevated express lanes unless you are in possession of an electronic device called a SunPass, as there are no toll booths on the elevated lanes.

Recently, should you drive the elevated express lanes without a SunPass your license plate is electronically captured using a digital image and you are billed for the toll which must be paid in a given amount of time or a traffic ticket may be issued. If you are driving a rental car your rental car company will bill you for the tolls incurred; check with your rental car company for more information.

Speaking of SunPass if you are going to be in the Tampa Bay area for a week or longer you may want to consider investing in one. If you have an EZ-Pass from any of the member states (such as Maryland, for example) your EZ-Pass will *not* work in Florida resulting in an unpleasant surprise arriving in your mail in the form of a warning letter or a traffic citation. The SunPass website has more information and details on how to obtain one and you can access their website at <http://www.sunpass.com>.

To get up to the minute traffic information in the Tampa Bay area a highly recommended resource is 511 Tampa Bay, which is easily reachable on your cell phone simply by dialing 511. The system is completely voice menu driven and is easy to navigate. However, if you are near your computer you can access this information at the 511 Tampa Bay website at <http://www.511tampabay.com>. Additionally, the major media outlets feature traffic information during the morning and evening commute hours Monday through Friday; [Bay News 9](#) (a 24-hour local news channel in the Tampa Bay area) is well known for their traffic reports not only on the weekdays but on the weekends too.

If your destination involves the beaches of Pinellas County, be aware if you see one of these on the way to your beach destination:



This sign advertises that you are crossing one of the many drawbridges that connect the beaches to the mainland of Pinellas County. Most drawbridges in Pinellas County operate on a time schedule during the day (such as :20 past the hour) but Johns Pass Bridge operates on a "on demand" schedule which can result in traffic backups especially on the weekends. You may want to take this into consideration when planning your travels on the beaches of Pinellas County especially if you have to be somewhere at a given time.³

Florida Traffic Laws that you should know

When you are driving on the roads of the Tampa Bay area or anywhere else in Florida there is one cardinal rule to keep in mind: The traffic laws of the State of Florida – not the laws of your home state – apply to you anytime you are traversing our great state.

Speed Limits

Speed limits are as posted. On Interstate 275 the speed limits are as follows; I have listed the metric equivalents for the convenience of our foreign visitors:

70 mph or 110 km/h: Southern terminus to Exit 5 (US 19 south) and the Livingston Avenue underpass (north of Exit 53, Bearss Avenue) to the northern terminus.

65 mph or 105 km/h: Between Exit 5 (US 19 south) and the eastern end of the Howard Frankland bridge through St. Petersburg and from the Livingston Avenue underpass to in-between Exit 53 (Bearss Avenue) and Exit 52 (Fletcher Avenue).

60 mph or 100 km/h: North of Exit 52 (Fletcher Avenue) to north of Exit 50 (FL 580/Busch Blvd).

55 mph or 90 km/h: Between the eastern end of the Howard Frankland bridge and north of Exit 50 (FL 580/Busch Blvd), except for the 50 mph segment through downtown Tampa as described below.

50 mph or 80 km/h: Between Ashley Drive/Tampa Street (Exit 44) and Floribraska Avenue (Exit 46A) through the downtown Tampa area. 50 mph is the speed limit on the downtown St. Petersburg feeders, Interstate 375 and Interstate 175, as well.

Within construction zones speed limits are as posted. Please make sure you reduce your speed to the speed limit within the particular construction zone you are traversing. Speeding fines are doubled for speed violations in a construction zone!

The Florida Move Over Law

A Florida law enacted recently requires you if in the event you see a law enforcement and/or a wrecker vehicle on the side of the road to move over to the next lane. If this is impractical or if you are on a two-lane roadway you must reduce your speed by 20 mph. This is a law for the protection of our law enforcement officers,

³ For more information on the drawbridges of Pinellas County see DrawBridgeAhead.com.

firefighters/EMT's and emergency wrecker personnel. Violations are dealt with by issuance of a Florida Uniform Traffic Citation.

DUI – Driving Under the Influence

The legal limit for DUI in Florida is .08.

If a law enforcement officer suspects you are under the influence, expect to be placed in handcuffs and taken to the county jail depending on the location where you are taken into custody. Expect to remain at the county jail until you are sober.

The penalty for a first occurrence of DUI is:

- Fine of up to \$500.00
- 50 hours of community service
- Driver's License taken away from you for six months
- Impoundment of your vehicle for ten days
- Jail term of up to six months at the discretion of the court
- Probation for up to one year
- Penalties are more severe if bodily injury or death is involved (criminal charges escalate into felony criminal charges)
- Mandatory alcohol education class
- Attorneys fees
- A record for DUI that follows you the rest of your life – Florida law prohibits withholding of adjudication of guilt on DUI charges

The fact that you are from out of state does not exempt you from Florida's DUI laws while you are visiting the Tampa Bay area. ***Don't let your Tampa Bay area (or any other part of Florida) visit include a stay in the county jail – if you drink, don't drive!***

In Case Of Accident

Should you be involved in an accident, whether it may be on Interstate 275 or any other highway in the Tampa Bay area, do the following:

- If your vehicle is damaged but moveable, move your vehicle to the side of the highway. *This is for your protection and to help keep traffic moving.* Even one small minor accident on Interstate 275 can turn into a major backup in the matter of a few minutes.
- Render first aid to anyone who is injured.
- ***Do not leave the scene of an accident you may be involved into! In Florida, leaving the scene of an accident is a crime punishable by fines and/or imprisonment!***
- Call the Florida Highway Patrol on your cell phone by dialing *347 (that translates into *FHP). ***If there are any injuries, dial 911 to request paramedics.*** Nonetheless, give the 911 or FHP operator your location.
- The FHP Trooper will complete an accident report and will give you a copy to keep for your records, especially for insurance purposes.
- If you are driving a rental car, immediately contact your rental car company for instructions.

Right Turns on Red

Right turns on red are permitted in Florida. However, be aware of signs where you are not allowed to make a right turn on red.

For More Information on Florida's Traffic Laws

The official Florida traffic laws are contained in Chapters 316 (State Uniform Traffic Control), 318 (Drivers Licenses) and 322 (Motor Vehicles) of the Florida Statutes. A copy of the Florida Statutes is available online at the website of the Florida Legislature at <http://www.leg.state.fl.us>. The information presented here is for the convenience of our visitors and should not be construed as legal advice. You may wish to consult with an attorney of your choice, especially if in the event you received a traffic citation and the fines are substantial.

Returning to Tampa International Airport for your return flight

When you return to Tampa International Airport to catch your return flight home here are a few recommended steps to make your exit from the Tampa Bay area a breeze.

Checking in for your flight

If you travel with a laptop computer or you have access to a business center with an Internet connection at your hotel, it is strongly recommended that you check in for your flight online the day before your return flight. Most major airlines offer online check in for your flight. For example, on Southwest Airlines you can check in online 24 hours in advance of your flight's departure.

Returning your rental car



Allow plenty of time to get to Tampa International Airport due to Interstate 275 traffic and lines you may encounter once you are in the airport, especially the lines

for the security checkpoint. Be aware of ongoing construction within the airport area which should be completed around 2010.

If you are coming from St. Petersburg use Interstate 275 north to Exit 39B, which will be FL 60 West. If you are coming from Tampa or points east use Interstate 275 south to Exit 39. If you are coming from Clearwater use the Courtney Campbell Causeway and follow the signs to the airport.

As soon as you enter Tampa International Airport on the access highway pay attention to the signs for rental car return. Depending on where you rented your car from, follow the signs for rental car return.

Alamo and National renters: As soon as you enter Tampa International Airport take the exit for the Post Office and the Economy Parking Garage. Follow the road just like you were going to the parking garage but you will take a right turn at the traffic signal. After you make this turn follow the road around the bend and the Alamo/National car rental complex will be on your left. After you complete your rental car formalities board the shuttle bus to the terminal.

If you are using a taxi cab or shuttle service, be sure to make the appropriate reservations the night before your departure. If you are staying in a hotel the arrangements can be made for you, but be sure to confirm things beforehand to avoid unpleasant surprises.

If someone is dropping you off, consider using the Short Term Parking Garage. Besides, your first hour of parking is free. You can also use the departure drive, but you must drop off your passenger immediately as no waiting is permitted.⁴

Getting to your flight

If you have baggage to check and/or need to check in for your flight at the airport: You will need to perform these activities at your airline's ticket counter located on the ticketing level, which is the second floor. After that you can then proceed to the transfer level on the third floor and to the airside shuttle that corresponds to your airline.

Check with your airline as to when you need to arrive to check in for your flight. If you are departing on an international flight, you will have to arrive earlier. The best time to check is the day before your flight by checking your airline's website or by calling your airline.

*If you do not have baggage to check **and** you have checked in for your flight:* Simply proceed to the airside shuttle that corresponds to your airline. Have your boarding pass and your photo ID to show to the ticket checker as you board the shuttle and again to the TSA screener as you pass through security.

⁴ Bear in mind you will not be permitted to see your party depart at the gate, as the airside are restricted to ticketed passengers only. If you have a specific need (such as a child traveling alone), speak with your airline at the ticket counter about receiving a gate pass.

Have a safe flight home and don't forget to come back soon!

Disclaimer: The inclusion of any business name does not imply endorsement by Edward Ringwald; it's provided simply as a service for our Tampa Bay area visitors arriving by air.

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Appendix 1: Airlines and their assigned color code at Tampa International Airport

Source for both appendixes: Tampa International Airport website,
TampaAirport.com

Follow the red color code for:

AirTran
 Air Canada
 British Airways
 Cayman Airways
 Continental
 Frontier
 Midwest
 Spirit
 Southwest
 Ted
 United
 WestJet

Follow the blue color code for:

American
 Delta
 JetBlue
 Northwest/KLM
 US Airways

Appendix 2: Airline Telephone Numbers

Airline	Telephone Number
AirTran	(800) 247-8726
Air Canada	(888) 247-2262
British Airways	(800) 247-9297
Cayman Airways	(800) 422-9626
Continental	(800) 525-0280
Frontier	(800) 432-1359
Midwest	(800) 452-2022
Spirit	(800) 772-7117
<u>Southwest</u>	(800) 435-9792
Ted	(800) 241-6522
United	(800) 241-6522
WestJet	(800) 538-5696
American	(800) 433-7300
Delta	(800) 221-1212
JetBlue	(800) 538-2583
Northwest/KLM	(800) 225-2525
US Airways	(800) 428-4322

The above airline telephone numbers are listed as a convenience. Edward Ringwald is not responsible for any errors or changes to the above list.