

INTRODUCTION

I always used to think of Orlando as a touristy haven of theme parks and tacky T-shirts shops. That is, until I lived there for three years and realized the city had amazing shopping, superb hotels and spas, delicious restaurants, and first-class cultural events—making it an ideal location for a “Girls Getaway” trip.

I was first introduced to “Girls Getaways” by my mother, Jeri. Let me say that my mom is an original. Growing up in the 1960s, she was the typical hippie wild child. She ran away from home and went to Woodstock, hitchhiked across Florida, mingled with rock stars, and lived the wild life. Then she met my dad, got married, had three kids, and was (and still is) a terrific mother. As my brothers and I grew up and left the house, Mom formed a group of women called “The PMS Group” (or PMSers for short). This group of women gets together on a regular basis, whether at each other’s homes or on getaway trips. It was because of my exposure to this group that I realized the tremendous value of the therapy that spending time with your friends can provide. My mom and her friends are a wacky and wonderful group who do not hold back on fun.

As I went through some rough times in my own life, I too turned to my girlfriends for love and support. I found these relationships and the time I spent with them was better than any professional therapy. We started having getaways in Orlando, New York, and Nashville—some of my favorite towns. I'll never forget these special trips and the huge impact the experiences with my girlfriends had on me during the good times and the bad. They accept me for who I am and whatever crazy things I may do. Great relationships with girlfriends are really like no other, and you must spend time with each other to leave your baggage behind and remember what is important. You only have one life...so make it memorable!

When my old college roommates and I began this annual trip to Orlando to revisit our alma mater Rollins College, we did not adequately research what to do, where to stay, or where to eat. We thought that just because we had lived in the city, we knew where to go. We did remember some of the old hangouts; however, the city changes very quickly, and we were not aware of some of the new places we should try.

With a few years of experience now, we have done extensive research on how to have the perfect Girls Getaway weekend in Orlando. From where to stay, where to eat, where to shop, where to get pampered, where to get cultured, and where to have fun—we have done it all!



College roommates Colleen, Sharon, and me at the Keith Urban concert during one of our Girlfriends Getaway trips to Orlando. This was one of our favorite nights.

So, for all girls who want to get away, I have compiled highlights for your Orlando travels in this convenient travel guide. From cultural and natural attractions to the trendiest new restaurants and shopping areas, this book is a must-have for any girl visiting the Orlando area.

For the latest news and help in planning your Girls Getaway to Orlando, please visit
www.GirlsGetawayGuide.net