

OCEAN WALK VILLAGE

Not The Daytona Beach You Thought You Knew

by Melissa Wolcott and Al Martino

Daytona Beach. Fast cars, Harleys, college kids swarming at Spring Break...yes? Well, yes and NO. Daytona Beach is quietly and rapidly becoming much more than a Mecca for speed aficionados and kids seeking wild fun. The wild kids thing, by the way, is actually pretty much ancient history that is dredged up by old footage yearly on MTV, who can't seem to let go of the image

With the addition of the ever growing **Ocean Walk Village**, Daytona Beach is going through a revitalization, and reaching out to businesses, and families as a vacation destination — and succeeding quite well, according to Maria Hayworth, Ocean Walk Village's publicist. It is a \$200 million complex of resorts, water-themed entertainment, restaurants and boutiques — all located within six square blocks, and right on the beach.

We were quite pleased with our Ocean Walk experience on our recent visit, which began with our stay at the **Ocean Walk Resort**. The Florida coast is famous for its Art Deco architecture, and this complex's design continues to carry that torch. The architect, William B. Dodson, is to be commended.

Two towers hold 176 condominium-style suites and 124 timeshares in each tower. We were escorted through the complex by an informative Leslie Ireland, director of sales for the resort. One and two-bedroom suites are complete with fully-equipped kitchens, washer/dryers and in-room Jacuzzi's. Just bring a toothbrush!



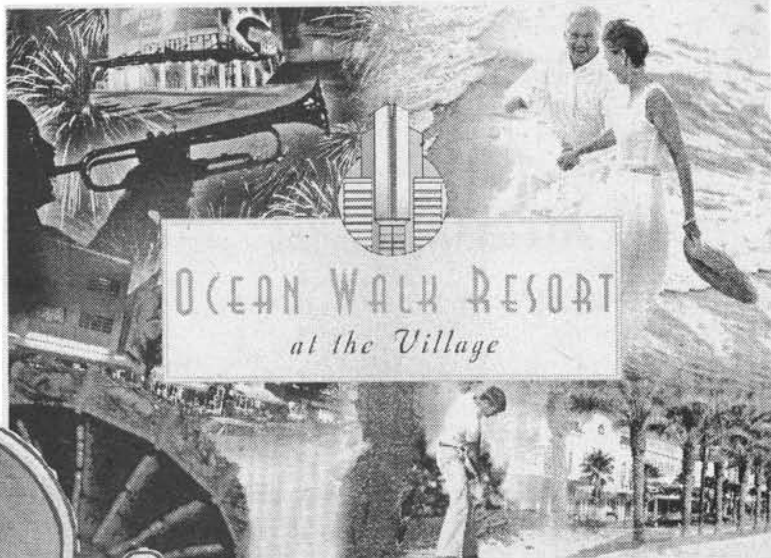
Not particularly morning people, we did manage to wake up in time for breakfast and a beautiful sunrise from our suite's large private balcony overlooking the ocean. We were tempted to check out the 300-foot "lazy river" that winds around an island putting green, but had a full day ahead of us.

The resort also includes a 5,000-square-foot conference facility, golf training center, an outdoor heated pool with waterfall,

exercise and health center, food court restaurants and a business service center. The second tower is still under construction, and will be completed by fall of 2002. The unique idea of creating a complex that is part timeshare, part condominium and part hotel is working out quite well. The first tower's condominium suites were almost completely sold out when we were there. The prices are extremely reasonable for beach front, so it's no surprise.

We then moved next door to experience the **Adam's Mark Resort**, which has 436 oceanfront rooms, meeting space and complete health club facilities. According to Stuart

Arp, Sr. Vice President & GM, a \$45 million expansion, adding 306 rooms, will increase the accommodations to 742 guest rooms and more than 60,000 square feet of meeting space, including an 18,000-square-foot ballroom. Five restaurants are available for guests to choose from — quick bites to continental cuisine. We experienced both ends of the spectrum with a delightful lunch by the pool, and then a wonderful gourmet dinner at Clocktowers. The restaurant is named for the historic clocktower that is located on the resort's property. The clocktower stands in tribute to Sir Malcolm Campbell's world land speed record set on Daytona Beach in 1935. The Ocean Walk complex beach front is Daytona's only traffic-free beach.

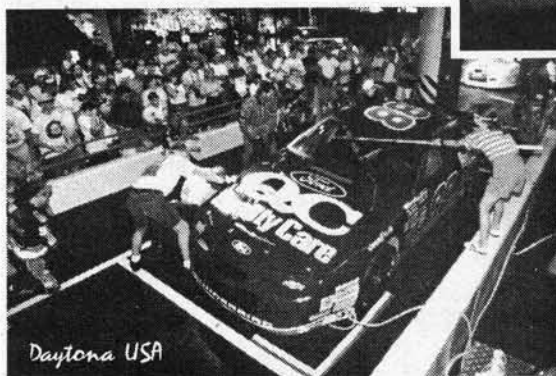
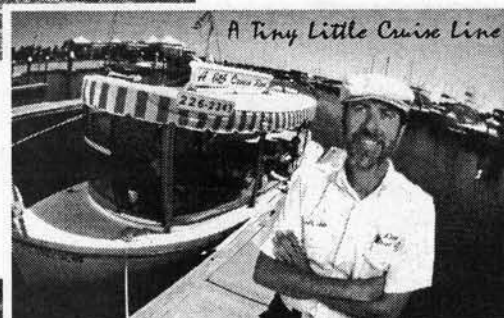
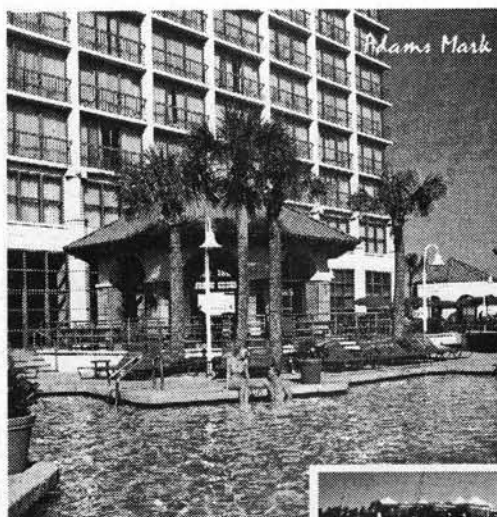


Right across the street from Adams Mark is **Adventure Landing Waterpark and Entertainment Center**,

which features Florida's first wet/dry super slide. Adventure Landing has five acres of family fun with 12 slides, including a three-level tree house with six slides winding throughout interactive water surprises, two tornado-configuration body slides, three nine-hole miniature golf courses meandering through a two-level go-kart track, and an entertainment complex with interactive arcade of more than 130 games. Park Manager, Gerry Schaeffer, talked us into trying out the go-karts. There must have been something wrong with my kart, as I came in last — a shameful thing in a town known for speed! It couldn't have been my (nonexistent) skill level. Wet and dry fun are available from May through August, and dry fun the rest of the year.

Ocean Center, across from Adventure Landing, is the focal point for concerts, conferences, auto shows and rodeos, and special performances such as the London Symphony Orchestra Pops Concerts. As part of Ocean Walk Village, Ocean Center broke ground this past spring on a planned \$20 million expansion project, according to Jan Pittard, Ocean Center's Sales & Marketing Specialist.

From eateries and upscale boutiques to a 10-screen all-stadium seating movie theater, the 90,000-square-foot **Beach Shoppes at the Village** are planned to captivate guests with afternoon and



evening delights. On board are Bubba Gump's Shrimp House, and Starbuck's coffee shop. Opening Fall 2002 between the two resorts, the oceanside entertainment complex will provide entertainment for leisure guests, and additional function options for meeting travelers.

On the Ocean Walk Village boardwalk is the **Daytona Beach Bandshell**, which was built in the 30's. Weekly concerts with various types of music are held from April through October. We happened to catch a toe-tappin' nostalgic big band show.

One afternoon we took a river excursion on "**A Tiny Little Cruise Line**." We had a relaxing time cruising down the Halifax River past lovely homes — some of which date back to 1887, and listening to chatty Captain Jim giving us the river's history, and a bit of gossip too.

Of course, no visit to Daytona Beach would be complete without visiting the famous Daytona Speedway. Even though there weren't any races scheduled when we visited, they have a very interesting motorsports attraction there — **Daytona USA** — that is cleverly arranged to take you through the history of the races, beginning with the first races on the beach right through to today. Exhibits include actual race cars, theater, live action and interactive games. There is also a 30-minute Speedway Tour which takes you behind the scenes at the raceway.

To assist visitors in getting around, a complimentary VOTRAN Beach Tram operates every 15 minutes from 9 a.m. - daylight hours and normal tides daily. Riders travel free of charge to the beach from International Speedway and Seabreeze Boulevards. Stops are also made at the Ocean Walk Village.

All in all, our perception of Daytona Beach was completely changed to our delight, and we highly recommend Ocean Walk Village as a family vacation destination.

OCEAN WALK VILLAGE INFO

Ocean Walk Village is located on A1A, a short ride north of US-92.

For more information on sites mentioned in this article, call or visit these websites:

Ocean Walk Village (877) 845-WALK; www.oceanwalkvillage.com

Ocean Walk Resort (800) 797-8511; www.oceanwalk.com

Adams Mark (904) 254-8200; www.adamsmark.com

Adventure Landing (386) 258-0071; www.adventurelanding.com

Ocean Center (800) 858-6444; www.oceancenter.com

Daytona USA (904) 947-6800; www.daytonausa.com

A Tiny Cruise Line (904) 226-2343; tinycruise@cs.com

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