

Sales Conference
2026
NBC | SECURITIES

NAVIGATING NEW HORIZONS

An aerial photograph of a boat moving across the ocean, leaving a white wake. A large, semi-transparent chevron graphic is overlaid on the image, pointing downwards. The text 'NAVIGATING NEW HORIZONS' is centered over the chevron.

The Florida Aquarium

A Vision Beneath the Surface

In the early 1990s, Tampa civic leaders set out to transform the city's waterfront into a hub for education, conservation and community engagement. The Florida Aquarium was then created in 1995 to carry out this mission and was designed to connect people with the wonders of Florida's natural aquatic ecosystems. The Aquarium's exhibits, ranging from coral reefs to coastal wetlands, sparked curiosity and built a lifelong appreciation for the marine world. c



Deepening the Mission

As global ocean conservation needs grew, so did the Aquarium's mission. In the 2000s, The Florida Aquarium expanded its impact through groundbreaking research and hands-on wildlife rescue efforts. Its coral restoration initiatives became internationally recognized, advancing innovative techniques to revive threatened reef systems. With a passionate team, the Aquarium continues to lead efforts in a sea turtle rehabilitation, shark conservation, and marine habitat protect. The Aquarium's consistent efforts helps ensure that Florida's aquatic environments thrive for generations to come.

(For the full story go to flaquarium.org)

A Closer Look at The Florida Aquarium

With more than 800,000 visitors each year, The Florida Aquarium is one of Tampa's most celebrated attractions and a leader in marine conservation. Here's a look at what visitors most often ask and what you'll want to know too.

What is the Florida Aquarium best known for? The Aquarium is internationally recognized for its coral conservation and restoration work, particularly its innovative research at the Center for Conservation in Apollo Beach, where scientists are developing techniques to save Florida's threatened reefs.

How many animals live at the Aquarium? The Aquarium is home to over 9,000 animals, representing species from Florida's wetlands to the world's coral reefs.

Where do the animals come from? Animals are acquired through rescue efforts, accredited breeding programs, rehabilitations, and partnerships with other AZA-accredited aquariums and wildlife organizations. Many animals are non-releasable

How big is the Aquarium? The facility spans 200,000 square feet and feature habitats that replicate Florida's natural ecosystems including mangroves, springs, and offshore reefs.

Does the Aquarium rescue wildlife? Yes! The Florida Aquarium plays a leading role in sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation, helping injured turtles recover and return to the wild. Their conservation teams are also active in shark research, coral spawning studies, and water-quality protection projects.

How many visitors has the Aquarium welcomed? Since opening in 1995, the Aquarium has welcomed millions of guests from around the world and continues to be one of the top cultural attractions in Florida.

Is the Aquarium involved in scientific research? Yes! The Aquarium's scientists work year-round on coral propagation, reef restoration, marine disease research, and species conservation, with work regarded as some of the most impactful in the United States.

Does the Aquarium give back to the community? Yes! As a nonprofit organization, the Aquarium provides community outreach programs, school partnerships, conservation education, clean-up initiatives, and accessibility programs that connect undeserved youth to marine science experiences.

How does the Aquarium benefit Florida's environment? Its research and restoration work directly supports the health of Florida's reefs, costal habitats, and marine wildlife. The Aquarium's conservation teams collaborate with state agencies, universities, and federal partners to protect ecosystems vital to Florida's environmental future.

Why the city Tampa? The Aquarium was developed as a cornerstone project to revitalize Tampa's waterfront. Today it remains a driving force behind tourism, education, and conservation, strengthening Tampa's identity as a hub for marine science and environmental stewardship.

How does the Aquarium impact Florida's future? Through research, education, and conservation action, the Aquarium plays a vital role in protecting Florida's waters for generations to come. Its efforts support healthier reefs, cleaner coastlines, and a stronger understanding of the marine world.

The Westin Tampa Waterside

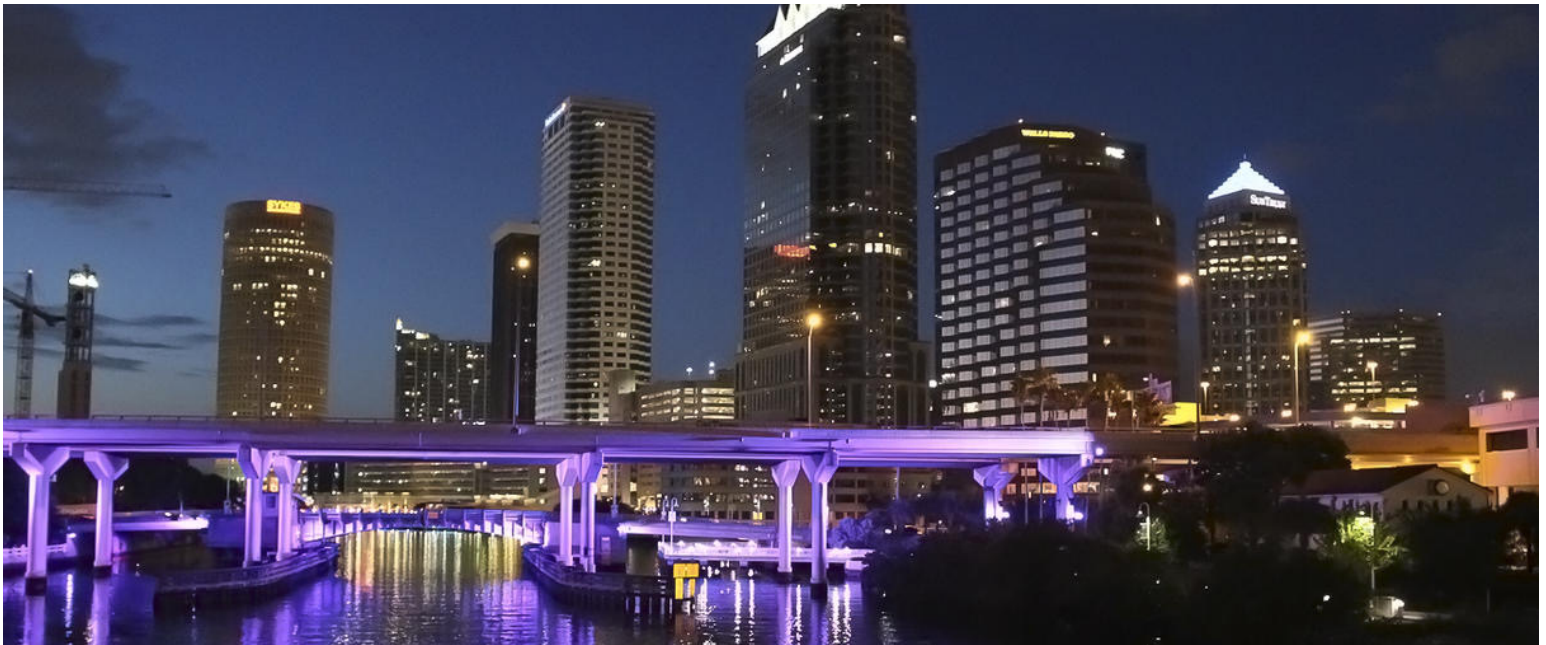
The History of the Westin Tampa Waterside

Preserving Tampa's History

The Westin Tampa Waterside first opened in 1985 as the Harbour Island Hotel. It was built during the major redevelopment of Harbour Island, which had previously been used for port and industrial activity. With its red-brick exterior, waterfront location, and elevated interior finishes, the hotel helped introduce a new era of hospitality on Tampa's growing urban shoreline.

Over the years, the property transitioned into the Westin Hotels and Resorts family. It now features modern guest rooms, refreshed event space, and panoramic views of Tampa Bay and the downtown skyline. The hotel continues to serve as a key part of the area's transformation, reflecting the city's shift from an industrial port to a vibrant destination for travel, events, and leisure.

Today, the Westin Tampa Waterside remains a favorite setting for gatherings, offering a blend of comfort, contemporary style, and a waterfront atmosphere that highlights the best of Tampa's revitalized Harbour Island.



Tampa places of interest within walking distance.



Conference Venues

1. The Westin Tampa Waterside – 725 S Harbour Island Blvd
2. The Florida Aquarium – 701 Channelside Dr

Coffee Shops and Pastries

3. The Daily Dose – coffee & eatery
4. Fast Jack's – breakfast, coffee, gelato, & sandwiches
5. Perk – coffee shop
6. Shortwave - coffee shop

Bars and Bistros

7. American Social Bar & Kitchen
8. The Pearl Tampa
9. Punch Room
10. Beacon Rooftop Lounge
11. LightHaus Beer Garden
12. Naked Farmer

Activities Near the Conference

Tampa Riverwalk

A scenic waterfront walk right outside the conference area. You can stroll for five minutes or wander longer, benches, water views, and plenty of spots to stop along the way.

0.1–0.3 mi | 2–6 min walk

Sparkman Wharf

A laid-back outdoor food and drink spot by the water. Grab tacos, a drink, or just hang out at a picnic table. Usually has music and a good after-hours vibe.

0.5 mi | 10 min walk

Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park

An open green space along the river. Nice place to sit, decompress, or catch the sunset without committing to an activity.

0.4 mi | 8 min walk

Tampa Museum of Art

A modern museum that's easy to pop into for a quick visit.

0.4 mi | 8 min walk

Florida Museum of Photographic Arts

Small gallery downtown with rotating photo exhibits.

0.4 mi | 8 min walk

Sail Pavilion Café

A casual waterfront café, good for coffee during the day or a drink in the evening. Easy meeting spot if people are splitting up.

0.3 mi | 6 min walk

Pirate Water Taxi

A fun way to see the city from the water without walking much. You can ride for a stop or two and hop off wherever looks interesting.

Pick-up points within 0.3–0.5 mi

Electric Boat Rentals (eBoats Tampa)

Rent a small electric boat with friends and cruise around the river, no boating experience needed. Great for groups who want something different but still relaxed.

~0.5 mi walk to docks

TECO Line Streetcar

A short, nostalgic streetcar ride that connects downtown to Channelside and Ybor City. Easy way to explore another area without dealing with traffic.

Stations within 0.5 mi

Rooftop & Waterfront Drinks (Nearby)

- **JW Marriott Rooftop Pool Bar** – casual but polished spot for a drink with a view
- **Water Street bars & lounges** – easy places to pop in without planning ahead

More Things to Do in the Area

Tampa Bay History Center

An easy museum to walk through at your own pace. Good if you want something indoors that does not require a lot of time or energy.

Walk from conference: 0.6 mi | 12 minutes

Convention Center Waterfront Area

Even without an event, the area around the Convention Center is pleasant to walk around in the evening. Benches, water views, and space to sit and talk.

Walk from conference: 0–5 minutes

Water Taxi Loop (Short Ride)

You do not have to treat it like a full tour. Ride for one or two stops to see the city from the water, then walk back.

Pick-up within 0.3–0.5 mi

Channelside Pier and Boardwalk Areas

Quieter than Sparkman Wharf but still scenic. Good for a calm walk after dinner.

Walk from conference: 0.8 mi | 15 minutes

Ybor City

If you want to do something more energetic one night, Ybor City has restaurants, bars, and historic streets. You can keep it casual with dinner or stay later if you want. Easy to reach by streetcar.

Streetcar from downtown stations

Restaurants & Bars Near the Conference

All distances listed as walking distance from the conference hotel.)

Quick Bites & Casual Spots

Sail Pavilion Café

Coffee, light bites, and drinks by the water. Works well for a late afternoon break or casual meetup.

Walk from conference:
0.3 mi | 6 minutes

Water Street Tampa Dining

Several cafés and counters close together. Easy to walk around and see what looks good.

Walk from conference:
0.2–0.4 mi | 5–8 minutes

Sparkman Wharf

Food stalls and bars right on the water. Easy to grab tacos, burgers, or a drink without a long sit-down meal.

Walk from conference:
0.5 mi | 10 minutes

Hattricks Tavern

Local favorite for burgers, wings, and beer. Fast service and very casual.

Walk from conference:
0.7 mi | 15 minutes

Sit-Down Dinners & Group Meals

Anchor & Brine

Seafood-focused restaurant at the Tampa Marriott Water Street. Good for a quieter sit-down dinner.

Walk from conference:
0.3 mi | 6 minutes

Lona by Chef Richard Sandoval

Modern Mexican with shareable plates. Works well for groups.

Walk from conference:
0.4 mi | 8 minutes

American Social Tampa

American food, cocktails, and water views. Lively but still easy to talk.

Walk from conference:
0.4 mi | 8 minutes

Columbia Café at the Tampa Bay History Center

Cuban-inspired dishes with outdoor seating. Reliable and relaxed.

Walk from conference:
0.6 mi | 12 minutes

Yeoman's Cask & Lion

British-style pub with comfort food and a relaxed atmosphere. Easy to drop in.

Walk from conference:
0.6 mi | 12 minutes

