News Release
St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches
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Ponce de León and 500 Years of History!
Florida's Historic Coast~sm~ Prepares for Commemorative Events

ST. AUGUSTINE (April 1, 2012)…. Long associated with Don Juan Ponce de León's momentous voyage of 1513, Florida's Historic Coast (St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches) will serve as a center of studies and events related to the 500th anniversary of the first major landing by Europeans on the shores of what would become the continental United States.

Scholarly studies indicate that Ponce de León first sighted and named La Florida on Easter Sunday, March 27, 1513. On April 2, according to a surviving navigational fix from his voyage, Ponce's three-ship fleet was at 30 degrees, 8 minutes north latitude – just south of present day Ponte Vedra Beach. Ponce and his landing party first came ashore in La Florida the following morning, April 3, 1513. To honor and celebrate Florida's rich Spanish and American heritage, Florida's Historic Coast will play host to numerous events and celebrations. These will begin in the spring of 2012 with *Culturally La Florida*, a presentation series highlighting the Spanish influences on Florida, and will continue with the 500th Anniversary of Ponce's discovery of La Florida in 2013; the 50th Anniversary commemorations noting the pivotal role the City of St. Augustine played in the 1964 civil rights movement; and finally in 2015, the Commemoration of the 450th Anniversary of the founding of St. Augustine, the nation's oldest city.

Each day of the year, visitors to Florida's Historic Coast experience living history at a collection of exciting museums, parks and attractions. Click here to learn more about experiencing living history in St. Augustine. For current updates on all things Ponce de Leon in St. Augustine | Ponte Vedra on Florida's Historic Coast, become a Ponce de Leon's 500th Facebook Fan. **Florida's Historic Coast will be commemorating these historic events at a series of exhibitions, celebrations and programs through 2015.**

2012 – Celebrating Spanish La Florida
- April 28-29:   Tall Ship Bounty Tours at St. Augustine Marina
- May 3 to 6: Culturally La Florida: Spain's New World Legacy
- May 14 to 19: Romanza Art and Music Week
- May 19: First Coast Opera: Viva Espana
- June 1 & 2: Reenactment of Sir Francis Drake's 1586 Raid on St. Augustine
- June 20 through 24: National Underground Railroad Conference
- June 23: Battle of Bloody Mose
- September 2012 to January 2013: Ancient City Mosaic Exhibit
- September 7 to 9: 16th Century St. Augustine Encampment and Reenactments
- September 8: 447th St. Augustine Founder's Day Celebration
- October 4 – 7: International Spanish Food & Wine Festival
- October 20: Spanish Constitutional Ceremony & Blessing
- November 17 & 18: St. Augustine Half-Marathon
- November 24 through January 31, 2013: Nights of Lights

2013: Celebrating 500 Years of La Florida
- January through April: New World in the Eyes of the Explorers Exhibition
- January through March: Discover First America! Program Adventures
- February 23: Nocha de Gala - Birthday of St. Augustine Founder Pedro Menendez
- April 6: Reenactment of Ponce de Leon Landing and 500th Commemorative Celebrations
- May 13 – 19: Romanza Art and Music Week
- Fall: Native American Gathering and Healing Ceremony
- September 6 - 8: 448th St. Augusitne Founder's Day Celebration
- October 3 - 6: International Spanish Food & Wine Festival
- November 16 & 17: St. Augustine Half-Marathon
- November 23: Maritime Heritage Festival
- November 23 through January 31, 2014: Nights of Lights

2014: Celebrating the Cultures of Florida's Historic Coast
- January through March: Discover First America! Program Adventures
- February 22:   Nocha de Gala - Birthday of St. Augustine Founder Pedro Menendez
- May: Treasure of America Convention
- June: Commemorative Civil Rights March
- September 6: St. Augustine 449th Founder's Day Celebration
- October 2 - 5: International Spanish Food & Wine Festival
- November 15 & 16: St. Augustine Half-Marathon
- November 22 through January 31, 2015: Nights of Lights

2015: Celebrating the Nation's Oldest City's 450th Birthday
- January through March: Discover First America! Adventure Programs
- February 28: Nocha de Gala - Birthday of St. Augustine Founder, Pedro Menendez
- September 5 – 12: Viva St. Augustine! 450th Celebration Commemorating the Founding the Nation's Oldest City
- October 1 - 4: International Spanish Wine and Food Festival
- November through January: Tapestry: Cultural Threads of Florida
- November 21 through January 31: Nights of Lights

For more about celebrations, events and festivals through 2015, visit www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com regularly.

In addition to the events and celebrations commemorating pivotal moments in Florida and American History, there are several legacy projects and programs underway that will enhance the visitors experience along Florida's Historic Coast. For more about the legacy and positive changes in the Nation's oldest city, visit StAugusitne-450.com/legacy.

Located midway between Daytona Beach and Jacksonville, Florida's Historic Coast features historic St. Augustine, the outstanding golf and seaside elegance of Ponte Vedra, 42 miles of pristine Atlantic beaches – the same beaches that greeted Ponce de Leon in 1513 when he discovered and named La Florida - an area whose boundaries included what would later become the eastern United States. For more information on events, activities, holiday getaways and vacation opportunities in St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches, go to the Visitors and Convention Bureau website at www.FloridasHistoricCoast.com, become a fan on Facebook or call 1.800.653.2489. And to keep up with all things Ponce de Leon in St. Augustine | Ponte Vedra on Florida's Historic Coast, become a Ponce Facebook Fan.

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