



FAMILY TRAVEL



THE IMPERIAL SUITE (here) at The Breakers is a 1,700-square-foot accommodation with a foyer, hand-picked furnishings, wet bar and five Juliet balconies.
 THE RITZ-CARLTON, AMELIA ISLAND's outdoor pool (opposite) has a kids' play area along with multi-level seating.

Florida for Families

BY NATALIE MANEVAL

We've rounded up several hotels with a range of locations, accommodations and experiences that are well-suited to host families.

At **The Breakers Palm Beach**, the Flagler Club is a 25-room private access hotel that opened last year. The resort within a resort (think of it as a

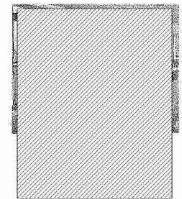
chic guesthouse) is on the sixth and seventh floors of the hotel, accessed through a private elevator. Nice Touch: Guests of Flagler Club receive free private car service upon arrival and departure, light snacks during the day, pre-dinner appetizers and a dedicated small staff that is on call to help them with every need.

Good to know: Two con-

nected king bedrooms or the Flagler Club Suite, which has a pull-out sofa and accommodates up to four people, can make groups comfortable. For more connectivity or for multiple generations staying together, The Breakers can create a six-bedroom suite out of a suite and five adjacent guestrooms.

The top suites at The Breakers

are the two Imperial Suites, each with two entrances, a foyer, five Juliet balconies, a personal concierge and panoramic views of the coastline. They sleep up to six people, including two children, or four adults with the help of a pull-out couch and rollaway. An Imperial Suite can also be connected to four additional guestrooms and suite/living area,





making it possible to sleep 16. The Breakers also provides infant tubs, bed rails, diaper-changing tables, babysitting reservations and more.

Adults can spend time at Ocean Fitness, a 6,000-square-foot workout facility with oceanfront views. Here they can participate in 60 different workout classes, cycle, experience yoga and more. The best part? Working out in front of the 10-foot-tall windows that afford views of the ocean.

Visitors, ages three to 12, can enjoy Camp Breakers, which is

open everyday. A fully trained staff operates the camp and if adults want to dine alone, the camp even hosts a night session, where little ones will play lawn games, star gaze and have bonfires on the beach. Note: The night session runs until 9:30 p.m. and includes dinner.

The Active Pool is one of the four pools on property and was created with happy clans in mind. Here, there are 25 bungalows that have personal concierges and come with a living area, a refrigerator, TV, gaming consoles and a private bathroom. To get the most

out of pool time, ask about the Kids' Intro to Scuba and the pool-side spin art experience. Note: Swimming lessons and water sport activities are available upon request for an additional fee.

Those who have had enough fun in the sun should head indoors to the Family Entertainment Center. This 6,100-square-foot complex is open daily and includes an arcade, a toddler and a play room (parents can see the play room while dining at the adjacent Italian Restaurant), an outdoor sports court and playground with sunshades during the day and lights at night. Tip: Make sure the children experience Florida's marine life by visiting the Camp Room, which has a saltwater aquarium filled with indigenous marine life.

Little ones are allowed to dine in all nine of the restaurants. At HMF, a restaurant and lounge, adults can order a signature drink, such as the Railcar #91 — which is made with Courvoisier VSOP, fresh lemon juice, local honey and orange foam — while those under 21 years of age sip Shirley Temples.

To book a VIP stay at The Breakers, contact Ivy Wong (Ivy.Wong@thebreakers.com; 561-653-6673).

The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island, and its Ritz Kids camp give children a chance to participate in storytelling and explora-

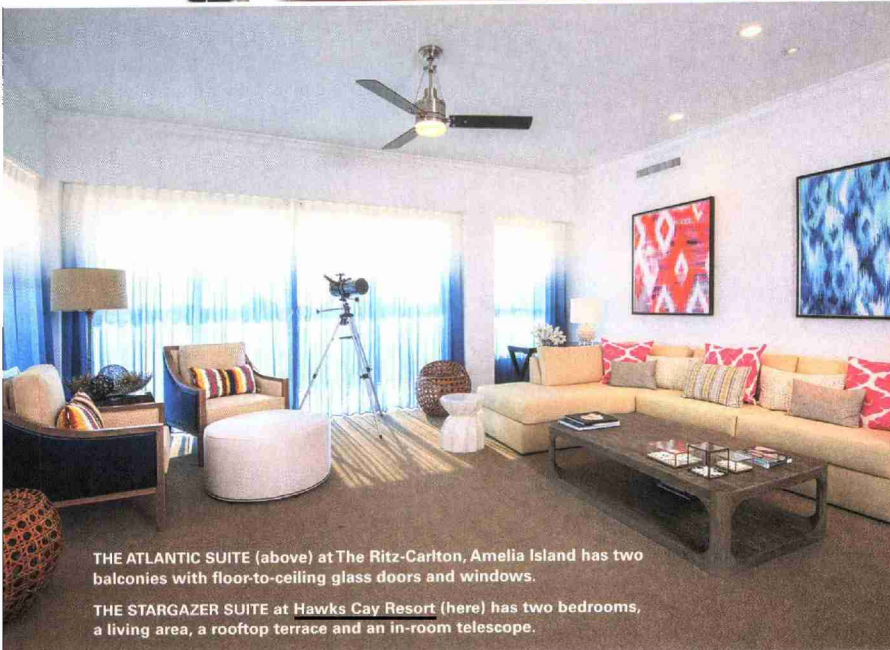
tion of the nearby forest and the sand dunes, as the hotel sits on a mile-and-a-half of dune-lined beachfront.

Good to note: The ocean water is swimmable and there is also a family-friendly pool on property. There are two other pools on property, one of which is for the spa. Hint: The spa pool is open to families, though it is meant to have a spa-friendly atmosphere. Travelers, 12 and above, can book some treatments. For families celebrating a special occasion like a birthday, the spa offers a buyout of the Serenity Suite or the co-ed lounge for private lunches and brunches. When it comes to booking, guests should make reservation one-week in advance and ask for the highly requested massage therapists, Stacy Myers and Justin Murphy. We also hear Karen Miner is sought after for facials.

At bedtime, parents can request the "Tuck-In with a Pirate" program, which includes a buccaneer who comes with milk and cookies.

Tip: The Ritz-Carlton Suite provides access to the Club Lounge, which has a dedicated concierge, and culinary presentations throughout the day.

The hotel can also arrange several family-oriented custom soft adventure experiences, such as cooking classes, eco-waterway tours, a luxury charter



THE ATLANTIC SUITE (above) at The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island has two balconies with floor-to-ceiling glass doors and windows.

THE STARGAZER SUITE at Hawks Cay Resort (here) has two bedrooms, a living area, a rooftop terrace and an in-room telescope.

JUST OPENED:

Playa Largo Resort & Spa

in Key Largo, part of Marriott's Autograph Collection, is the first resort to be built in the Upper Keys in more than 21 years. It's about an hour from Marathon International Airport.

The resort, which opened last month, is slated to have all the accommodations completed by December 1; this includes the Beach House, which comes with butler service, a private chef, a personal massage therapist and a sunset cruise or eco-tour. This three-bedroom, four-bath house also has a private pool and its own beach area. There is also a lawn that works well for family barbecues. For other family-friendly options, consider the 10 secluded two-story Bungalows, set among the natural hammock trees. Tip: Guests should make time to dine at one of the three signature restaurants, including Sol by the Sea, which has unobstructed panoramic bay views. To create a VIP stay, contact Mark Calibo (mcalibo@playalargoresort.com; 305-204-4050).

boat excursion, bike tours and horseback riding on the beach. To book a special stay, advisors should contact Jason Bockhorn (jason.bockhorn@ritzcarlton.com; 904-277-1009).

At Hawks Cay Resort in Duck Key, FL, families flying in via private jet can land at Marathon Airport, which is about a 15-minute drive away. Once at the hotel, we suggest checking into one of the two new Penthouse Suites. The Stargazer

Suite, true to its name, includes an in-room telescope. The Coastal Suite is decorated in light blue color scheme. Each of these suites can accommodate up to four guests and has 1,400 square feet of space with a living room, two bedrooms, two full baths and a private rooftop terrace. Guests can either choose a water view or a view of the grounds. The hotel also has two- and three-bedroom villas. Most of these villas boast kitchens with granite countertops

and stainless steel appliances, oversized decks and water views.

Around the resort, groups can make use of the year-round marina, diving, snorkeling and fishing. For some adrenaline-pumping activities, travelers can sign up for kite boarding, guided Jer Ski tours, sunset cruises, parasailing and Segway tours. For younger visitors, there is also a kids' club, Coral Cay, which includes a Pirate Ship Pool. This pool has slides,

tunnels and cannons that shoot water. With a shallow, beach-type entry and a depth of only eight inches this pool is a good fit for toddlers. Looking forward, this summer, the hotel will introduce Camp Hawk's Environmental Education Program, which will teach about Florida's unique ecosystem. Advisors looking to plan a VIP experience should contact Laura Minetti (lcwholesale@hawks.cay.com; 305-743-7000). ■

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