



For Immediate Release

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VISIT TAMPA BAY READIES AD CAMPAIGN AIMED AT SAME-SEX COUPLES

Anticipated end of marriage ban opens possibility for destination weddings, honeymoons

TAMPA (Dec. 4, 2014) – With Florida’s ban on same-sex marriage likely to end early next month, Visit Tampa Bay has prepared an ad campaign inviting gay and lesbian couples to choose Tampa and Hillsborough County for their weddings and honeymoons.

“This change will open an entirely new market for Tampa Bay tourism,” said Santiago Corrada, president & CEO of Visit Tampa Bay. “As the region has created domestic partnership registries and taken other steps to become more welcoming to same-sex couples, weddings and honeymoons are the logical next step. We’re reminding the LGBT community that Tampa Bay has treasure for everyone to discover.”

A three-judge panel of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals this week denied requests to extend a stay issued in August by a federal judge in Tallahassee who ruled the state’s 2008 same-sex marriage ban unconstitutional. The stay gave the state until Jan. 5 to appeal his decision.

Visit Tampa Bay’s campaign will launch in January. Print ads will run in gay-and-lesbian publications in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Ohio and Texas as part of a larger ad buy by Visit Florida, the state tourism agency. Digital ads are part of Visit Tampa Bay’s winter ad campaign in Chicago, Dallas and other selected cities.

Visit Tampa Bay also has created a microsite within its main website, visittampabay.com, targeting gay and lesbian travelers. Conquerwithpride.com carries details about LGBT activities during the year, Ybor City’s LGBT business community and gay-friendly hotels.

The upcoming “To Have and To Hold” ad campaign is just part of Tampa Bay’s growing acceptance of the gay and lesbian community.

On March 28, Tampa Bay will host the Tampa Pride festival, returning after a 10-year hiatus. The region is also home to the increasingly popular Tampa International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival each fall.

The City of Tampa created West Florida's first domestic partnership registry in 2012. Hillsborough County followed with its own domestic partner registry this year.

ABOUT VISIT TAMPA BAY

Visit Tampa Bay leads the effort of economic development through tourism. The mission of Visit Tampa Bay is to create vibrant economic growth for the Tampa Bay area by selling and promoting the Tampa Bay destination. The independent not-for-profit organization represents more than 700 businesses throughout the area and works to ignite interest for Visiting Tampa Bay.

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